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LEADING
DRUMMING
MAGAZINE

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APRIL '89

Steve Jordan

Lenny Castro

ROD STEWART'S
Tony Brock

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Montreal

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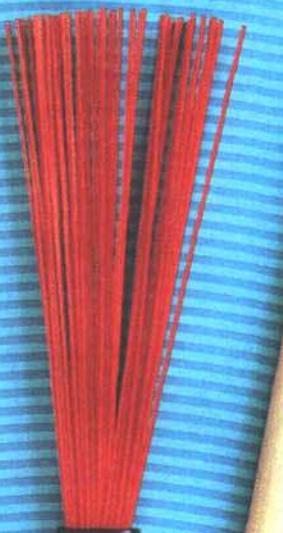


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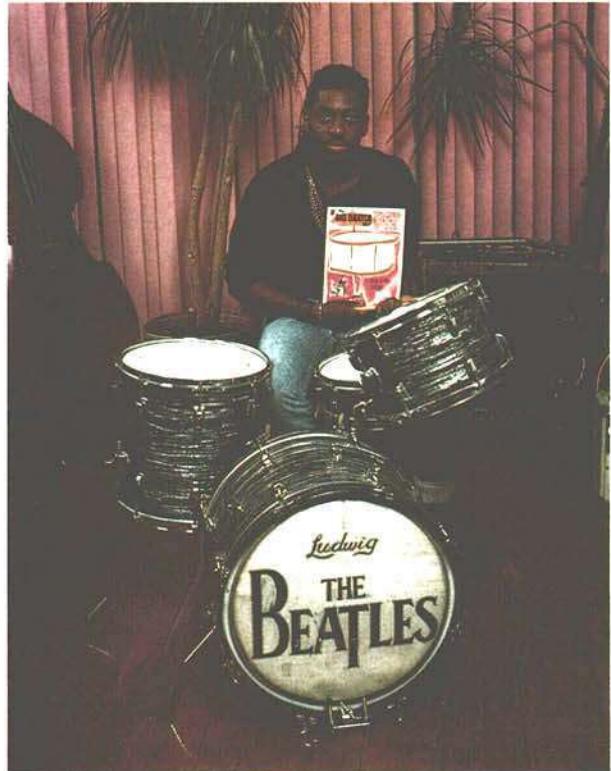


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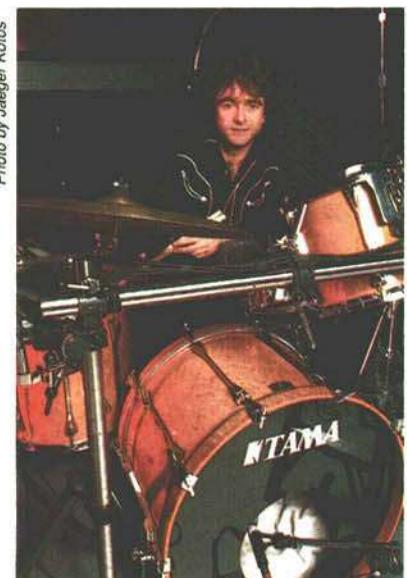


Photo by Jaeger Kotos

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After leaving *Late Night With David Letterman*, Steve Jordan worked with Keith Richards on Aretha Franklin and Chuck Berry projects. The association was so successful that Jordan and Richards went on to cowrite and coproduce Richards' solo album, *Talk Is Cheap*. Jordan talks about these activities and others, and discusses his emphasis on authenticity.

by Rick Mattingly

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In demand both live and in the studio, percussionist Lenny Castro has worked with such artists as Toto, Ricky Lee Jones, Al Jarreau, the Crusaders, and Karizma. Here, he recalls some of his more interesting sessions and discusses some of the drummers he likes to work with.

by Robyn Flans

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Six months after Rod Stewart changed his entire band, he rehired only one member of the previous group: drummer Tony Brock, who had been with Stewart since '81. Tony explains the key elements of his drumming, and how his style has fit the music of Stewart and Brock's previous group, the Babys.

by Teri Saccone

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To get an idea of the varied music scene in one of Canada's largest cities, we spoke to drummers Paul Brochu, Camil Beslisle, Guy Nadon, Bernard Primeau, and Richard Provencal.

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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

On Endorsements

Endorsements are certainly big business in the advertising world today. Take notice of the celebrities, from athletes to actors, who, for a fee, place their stamp of approval on everything from dog food to cosmetics in print and TV advertising. Perhaps the most highly publicized example ever was Michael Jackson's deal with Pepsi-Cola, which reportedly ran into seven figures. Rest assured, advertisers wouldn't place such great emphasis on luring endorsers if it weren't such an effective marketing tool.

Obviously, our industry is nowhere near the magnitude of the seven-figure deals, and yet, endorsements certainly are a significant factor in drum advertising. The truth of the matter is, name-artist endorsements have been used in print advertising to market drums for almost 50 years, and that's not likely to change.

Despite the effect a name artist may have on sales figures, an artist can occasionally lose credibility with his or her audience. This generally occurs with players who move randomly from one line to the next, praising the merits of each in print ads. It's not unusual for a consumer to make a substantial purchase based on an artist's endorsement, only to discover that very same artist playing another line of equipment a few months later.

Players who lend their names to every imaginable item on the market also tend to lose some degree of credibility. Observant consumers are quick to pick up on individuals who seem to appear too often in ads all over the industry. Though some may feel mass exposure benefits a career, in reality, it may in fact have a reverse effect in the eyes of the consumer.

Since endorsements play such an important role in today's advertising, we'd like to dig a bit deeper and get your opinion on the subject. Assuming you're in the market for new equipment, how strongly influenced are you by an artist's endorsement of a particular line? Have you ever purchased an item as a direct result of a favorite player's favorable comments? Do you assume that artists are paid huge sums of money for endorsements, and are not using the equipment they *really* think is best? How do you feel about players who frequently move from one line to another, as opposed to those who tend to maintain loyalty to one company over a period of time?

If you have any thoughts on this subject, please don't hesitate to write to me at *MD*. I'll be sorting out your comments over the next few months, and I'll report on our findings in a future issue. I think this is something all of us in the industry might like to know a little bit more about, and the ideal place to start is with you—the buying public. I'll be very interested in hearing your comments.

RS

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READERS' PLATFORM

CHAD WACKERMAN

You gotta respect a guy like Chad Wackerman. He represents just about everything that a drummer should be: a versatile player, a schooled and serious musician, an accomplished technician, and a pretty decent, humble-sounding guy. I enjoyed many of the statements that Chad made in Robyn Flans' interview (December '88 MD) alluding to his conscious effort to learn from as many other drummers as possible without actually becoming a clone of anybody. He certainly has succeeded in an admirable way. I think it's safe to say that he has outgrown his "child prodigy" image, and is well on his way to becoming a drummer of major stature within the industry. The insights that I gained into Chad's playing techniques and his ways of thinking about drumming were the most valuable part of the interview for me. Thanks a bunch!

Tom Wheeler
Dallas TX

ALLAN SCHWARTZBERG

Up until reading your interview with him in the December issue, I had never heard of Allan Schwartzberg. I'm not surprised at this, based on the fact that he is primarily a studio session drummer, and they often remain anonymous for many years. But I was surprised—and astounded—when I looked over the *Listener's Guide* you included, and saw the albums on which Allan has appeared. This guy's really done a little bit of everything! There have been several occasions when I've wondered why *MD* was covering a studio drummer who meant little to me. But I found myself fascinated as I "followed along" on Allan's workday. The story was revealing, enjoyable,

and honestly very educational. I gained new insight into the attitudes of at least one of the "studio heavyweights" that people talk about. Now I'm going to see if I can find a couple of those albums on which Allan has played, and check him out for myself.

Frank Karlofsky
Sioux City IA

LIONEL HAMPTON

I've been a fan of Lionel Hampton ever since I saw him on a TV show, over 20 years ago, doing a drum solo. In addition to playing with solid musicality, he was twirling his sticks, tossing them up and catching them, and literally bouncing them off his drumheads—all without missing a beat. Many drummers in rock today are doing these same "tricks"—which I think are perfectly acceptable parts of being a showman—but without nearly the fundamental musicality and creativity that Hamp brought to a drumset. And when you couple that talent with his skills as a vibist, composer, and bandleader, you have a musician truly deserving of the label: "legend." I only hope that I can be playing, grooving, and smiling in the same way Hamp is doing when I hit 80 years of age. More power to him, and thanks to *MD* for a most enjoyable visit with this musical giant (December '88 MD).

Ed Whitcomb
Annapolis MD

FROM THE EMERALD ISLE

Just a brief note all the way from Dublin, Ireland, to tell you how much I enjoy your magazine. It's a great way to keep in touch with everything that is happening in the U.S.

What a great article the interview with Jeff Porcaro in the November '88 issue was. Jeff seems to be a very humble guy; it's great to see such a virtue in someone so good. Maybe he might think of bringing Toto to Ireland the next time they tour. After all, we are now the rock capital of the world. Everybody plays Dublin. Maybe my band, Face To Face, could even play in support! I rooted out the Porcaro interview from a few years back (February '83), and it was nice to compare both stories. Keep up the good work.

Michael Heffernan
Ballybrack, County Dublin, Ireland

THANKS TO DICENSEO'S

I would like to take this opportunity to give my thanks to Dick Dicenseo's Drum Shop of Quincy, Massachusetts. During my quest for a set of Ludwig *Vistalite* drums, they provided a great deal of professional assistance—which is often hard to find these days. For this reason, the entire staff at Dicenseo's definitely deserves recognition.

A set of *Vistalites* in good condition today is a rarity, and I was having a lot of difficulty trying to locate anybody who owned one. The staff at Dicenseo's went out of their way to locate someone for me who was selling a set in good condition and at a good price. Today, I proudly own a set of blue, mint-condition *Vistalite* drums. For this, I again say "thanks" to Dicenseo's, and I strongly recommend that any drummer in the New England area pay this great store a visit.

Steve Austin
Acton MA

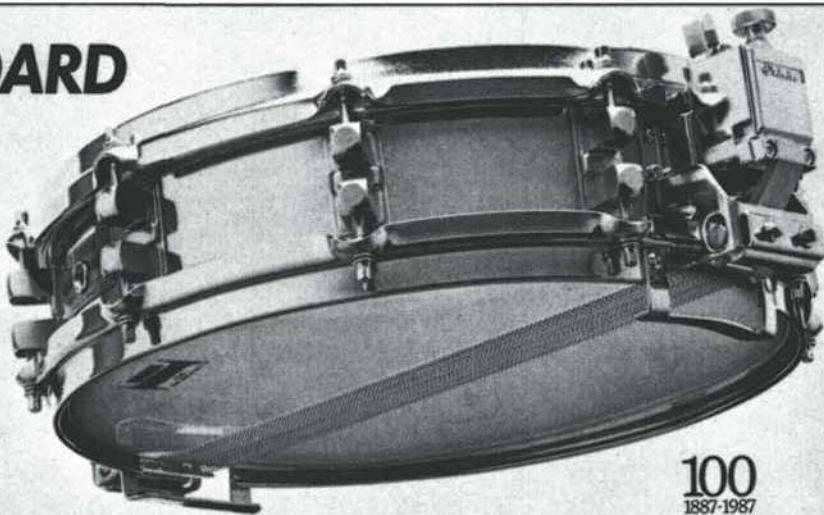


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Bill Berry

Until about two years ago, R.E.M.'s Bill Berry would never have considered using a click track. His perspective changed, however, when he joined two of his bandmates—bassist Mike Mills and guitarist Peter Buck—on Warren Zevon's *Sentimental Hygiene*. "Click tracks are the L.A. way to do it," Berry explains. "I was hesitant: I thought, This isn't rock 'n' roll.' But it was great, and opened a whole new thing for me. It keeps the tempo in line, which bothered me about *Fables Of The Reconstruction*; the tempo went all over the place on that record.

"With Warren Zevon," Berry continues, "I was forced into a click track situation and really liked it. It helps recording, because you can take three takes of a song, and if the first is great except for the bridge, but the bridge is great in the second take, you can literally take that piece of tape and pop it in because the tempos are exactly the same. Some songs still have to move, so I won't necessarily want that. But the most painful thing listening back to our older records, especially *Fables*, is the tempo. On *Document*, half the songs we kept were done with a click, so it was a move forward into 'slickdom.' It still felt right, not like I was holding back."

Green is R.E.M.'s first record with a new label, Warner Bros. "We knew everyone was saying 'Sellout!' and waiting to pounce on it when it came out," says Berry, "so we decided to throw a curve ball and write screwy songs, definitely un-R.E.M.-ish songs, and we pulled it off."

According to Berry, songwriting is a constant activity for R.E.M., and while on tour, soundchecks are a particular source of inspiration. Two of Green's tracks, "Pop Song 89" and "Orange Crush," even found their way into the live shows long before they ever made it to tape.

Once in the studio, Green found R.E.M.'s members playing musical chairs with instrumentation. "We were picking up instruments we wouldn't usually play," Berry notes. "Mandolin, for me, was a completely new thing, as accordion was for Mike, although he is adept at keyboards. But fumbling around to find fingerings, you come up with mistakenly hit things that sound cool. I had the hottest writing streak when I first picked up the guitar because I would make mistakes, change fingers, and think, 'Wow! There's a melody there!' Now I know how to play a little better, so it's a little bit harder. Maybe next time I'll pick up French horn!"

As R.E.M. continues progressing and building their following, Berry keeps "falling back through the music I grew up on. My brothers and sisters listened to Motown before I could operate a record player, and I hear a lot in my drum patterns that mimic that music, I guess. I'm sort of playing everything all at one time."

He credits outside projects such as the Zevon album as essential in seasoning his versatility. "One of the best experiences I ever had as far as drumming goes was The Corn cob Webs, a band Mike and I were in with the greatest guitar players in Athens and the best bassist I ever heard. We did old cover songs. To actually sit down and listen to those original records and play the songs live was a whole new thing for me. It made me a better drummer because it wasn't a free-form thing where I had to create. It was handy to be told what to do, in a sense. I listen to and enjoy other drummers, but I don't like to sit and study what they do. In this situation, I did. It was healthy and will be a lot more common in the future, I'm sure."

—Elianne Halbersberg

Stephen Perkins

At 21, Stephen Perkins is elated at how his career is progressing. Not only does he get to be as creative as he wants, but the band that allows him to do that, Jane's Addiction, has gone from being an L.A. cult band with an independent live album to a Warner Bros.-signed act with their first major-label release, *Nothing's Shocking*.

Describing their music, Stephen says, "I would say it's like what rock 'n' roll used to be like, where you could have a beautiful acoustic song on a record right next to a funk song, and the next one could be a head-banging kind of song, more like classical music with basic rock 'n' roll instruments. That's the way it is with us—no formula."

"The basic tracks of this album were me and the bass player," Stephen says. "The guitarist played rhythms through the headphones, but it wasn't being recorded. I did all the tracks live with the bass player, except maybe one or two really syncopated ones. We had about four different drumsets in the studio—ten snare drums and whatever else we needed. If we needed 16" single-headed toms or 10" double-headed toms, we'd get those. We changed everything, every song, sometimes even twice in one song. One song started off with a real psychedelic reggae groove, and by the end, we were doing kind of a punk thing. The drum sounds that I was using at the beginning of the song weren't really tough enough, though, so we changed the snare drum and screwed around with the toms and the heads. Dave Jerden [coproducer/engineer] was real cool. He just let me do what I wanted, and I was never unhappy with what came out."

Jane's Addiction recently opened shows for Iggy Pop, as well as doing their own club tour. Live, Stephen says, the music and approach vary as well. "Every night is a different drumset—whatever the stage calls for. And every song is different. The acoustic stuff consists of maybe an 18" bass drum, some bongos, maybe a

small cymbal, brushes, and a snare. On the hard stuff, I use your basic huge drumset. Some of the acoustic songs just need a good solid beat, and some of them just call for a moody bongo sound—not really playing with a beat, but doing some weird stuff off the singer, with the guitar player and the bass player keeping the beat.

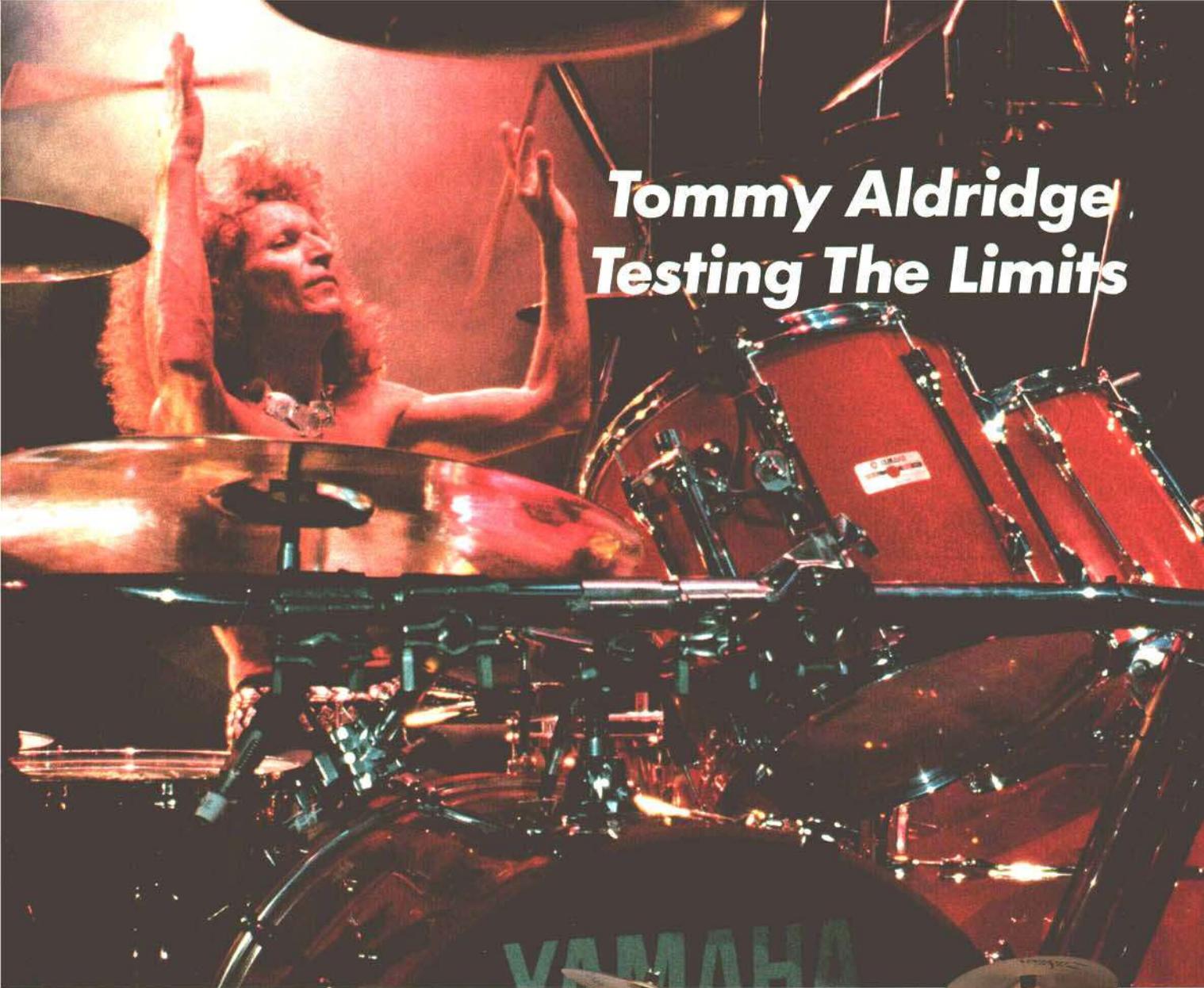
"I think as I get older," he continues, "I'll definitely become more simple live and in the studio. I'm young now and I'm sort of a basher, and in the studio I have all these thoughts: 'Let's do another tom overdub, and I've got this hi-hat part I can put in over here.' It'll sound good, but it might clutter up the music and take away from the real point. I'm learning every day, especially on the road, about really getting down to the music instead of going off on myself. The guys in this band like to work out really good parts and make everything really meaningful, and it's really helped me a lot."

—Robyn Flans

John Poe

Some people might say that there has been a steady redefining in the past few years of what it means to be in a "Southern band." Others would insist that the diversity among the recent crop of talented groups like Let's Active, Pylon, Fetchin' Bones, and R.E.M.

proves that there really isn't any "Southern sound" at all; after all, Athens, Georgia's B-52's were a pretty good indication ten years ago that anything was possible south of the Mason-Dixon. One of the more individual-sounding bands to emerge from the Southeast lately is Georgia's Guadalcanal Diary, and drummer John Poe



Tommy Aldridge Testing The Limits

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Tommy plays Power Recording Custom because they cut it — every song, every style, any volume level. Any drum can sound good if you hit it once, he says. But when the music gets complex and loud most drums can't pass the test. They limit your playing.

The Yamaha signature: maximum articulation no matter how intense the music gets or how hard you play. Tommy says it's the 6 ply birch shells. "They're thin and resonant, but really strong. They take the kind of stress I give them."

I've been offered more than just drums to play other brands. I play Yamaha. My music's too important."



emphasizes what it might *not* mean to play rock in the South: "Southern bands like the Allman Brothers and Marshal Tucker are all well and fine, but I personally don't enjoy them. I'm Southern, but I was raised in a suburb of Atlanta, and I really don't feel a kinship with that southern mentality, so to speak, even though my whole family was raised in Macon, Georgia. I always listened to rhythm & blues when I was young because those seemed to be the popular records at the time. When I first heard of the Kinks, though—that's when I really got absorbed into the British thing, and I still am in my writing and playing. There's this period in the '60s that I can never seem to get out of."

On the new Guadalcanal Diary album, *Flip Flop*, John has gotten some extra space to express some of his writing ideas. "In the past," he says, "I've come up with music and given it to [singer] Murray [Attaway] to write some lyrics to, but he hasn't seemed to be able to come up with anything. So this time I wrote my own. When I first joined the band, I said, 'Look guys, I don't want to sing and I don't want to write; I just want to play drums and have some fun with it.' At the time I was doing lots of other things—playing bass in one band, guitar in another, and also writing for those things. But as Guadalcanal Diary became more popular, I didn't have time to do all those other things. So all the songs that I would have saved before, I gave to the band this time around. My writing style is different from Murray's, so I would try to coach him on how I would deliver things. It's more fun for me to sit back and see how he would deliver it; I get a good hysterical laugh."

Those who have seen Guadalcanal Diary live or on video may have noticed something a bit unusual about John's playing style. He plays a left-handed kit, and rides with both hands. "It was an issue of *MD*, of all things," John recalls. "There was some article saying that a drummer should be able to play any drum or cymbal with the nearest hand. And that

always stuck in my mind. When we were practicing for our first job, and we were going over songs for the tenth time, I just started playing open-handed, and thought, This is really easy! So I reversed some things in my mind and just picked it right up."

But why did he ever play left-handed drums in the first place? "When I got a drumset, I set it up right-handed, and I just couldn't play. Finally I switched it around to left-handed and I was just right at home. So that's what made me think I was a left-handed person to begin with."

—Adam Budofsky

Kenny Malone

Creation is the name of the game for Kenny Malone, who has recently been in the studio with George Jones (on a duet album that featured people like Ricky Van Shelton and Charlie Daniels), a Johnny Cash duet album (with artists like Emmylou Harris, Dolly Parton, and even Brooke Shields), John Jarvis, Mark O'Connor, Russ Barenberg, John Hartford, and Shelby Lynne.

What keeps Kenny excited is being allowed to create sounds, live or in the studio. "I'll usually put down a basic track with drums and then complement whatever's happening with the percussion. All of Don Williams' stuff has extensive percussion. He's one of the people who, years ago, let me use a conga when congas weren't really looked upon as a country-fied instrument. I didn't necessarily use the orthodox conga techniques, but my own techniques. I like to take the basics of drums to the tabla, which I'm really into now, and look for my own sounds by using my own rudiments."

Kenny has sculpted his own drums, which he plays in his live outlet, Tone Patrol. And he and percussionist Sam Bacco (who works in Tone Patrol as well) have begun creating their own percussion instruments. "The idea came to us simultaneously," Kenny marvels. "He had a dream about it one night, and I was just driving along with my wife, Janie, thinking about an alternative to playing

the high end on cymbals and hi-hat, and the shape flashed into my mind. The next morning I was teaching with Sam at Belmont College, and I said, 'I thought of a new musical instrument last night.' He said, 'Don't tell me what it was. Draw it on this napkin.' We both drew the identical shape, and started jumping up and down! That's the first time that's ever happened to me with another person.

"The instrument is basically an elongated triangle with two curved sides, and it wedges in your hand. It's a shaker with two different chambers, and it has tone prongs inside made out of drill rod steel. It has a bridge across those two curved sides, which are the sounding boards, and we put BBs in it, but that's interchangeable. You can put whatever you want in these things because the tops and bottoms are removable. But it's got a real cutting high edge that you can hear without amplifying in clubs, and it's as loud as a tambourine."

He and Bacco have patented the *Shak-ka* and are marketing a line of various instruments based on it. "Our dream is to start a company called Fun Drums, Incorporated, which would have all these different percussion instruments. Right now we're making a model of the *Shak-ka* that is half the size called a *Shak-kita*, and a *Shak-kolin*, which is similar to a violin. You can actually tune its strings—which run on the inside to mandolin pegs—to chords and things. The *Shak-kuiro* is like a guiro, and I made a *Shak-kuitar*, which has a string on the outside with a moveable bridge. I play it with a bamboo reed that I get out of my backyard."

Kenny says he recently used the *Shak-ka* on John Jarvis' album and on a project by The Cluster Pluckers. "It's a nice sound. I used it in conjunction with a tambourine roll, and it was just beautiful."

It's this kind of creation of sound that Kenny lives for. "I would give anything if I could totally understand acoustics and the way they behave. That's just a lifelong study. That's my first love, I think."

—Robyn Flans

NEWS

Jim Keltner in the studio with Ricky Lee Jones.

Jerry Allison on tour with the Crickets.

Craig Krampf recording with Kelly James, Alabama (along with drummers **Mark Herndon** and **Owen Hale**), and Juice Newton (along with **Harry Stinson**).

Dann Gillen doing scattered dates with Anthony Newley.

Michael Radovsky in the studio with Giles Reaves and Jon Coin.

Larry Crockett on a European tour entitled *Motown Chart-busters*, working with such acts as Martha & the Vandellas, Marv Johnson, and Junior Walker & The Allstars.

Ed Eblen recently played a benefit for L.I.F.E. (Love Is Feeding Everyone) at the Universal Amphitheatre in Los Angeles, backing such acts as Earl Thomas Conley, Kathy Mattea, Moe Bandy, Danny Cooksey, and Dennis Weaver. After doing a USO tour, **Phil Hart** is currently in the midst of a North American tour with Kansas.

Jim Keltner and **Jerry Marotta** on tracks for Maria McKee's project. Jerry is also on Paul McCartney's newest.

John Keene on Steve Lukather's solo project. Keene, along with **Prairie Prince** and **Mike Baird**, worked on Richard Marx's next album.

Denny Carmassi on records by Patty Smyth and Don Barnes.

Ricky Fataar on Bonnie Raitt's upcoming album.

Russ Kunkel rehearsing with Ripe Jack. He can be heard on Peter Blakely's record and the *Land Before Time* soundtrack.

Stan Lynch recording with Ghost Town.

Donny Baldwin on new Starship release.

Martin Hanlin on new release from The Silencers.

Chuck Bonfante recently completed an album with Saraya, and congratulations to Chuck and Lenore on their recent marriage.

Congratulations also to **Paul Jamieson** on his marriage to Constance Andronico.

David Derge recently did some gigs with Richard Thompson.

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PETER ERSKINE



Photo by Mark Harris

Q. I just got a copy of Weather Report's 8:30, and I'd first like to say that your playing really shines. I have several questions. First, on "Black Market," was the section preceding and including your duel with Wayne Shorter written, just well-rehearsed, or totally improvised? Second, how is that thunder sound at the end produced? Third, the title track gives Jaco Pastorius credit for the drums. Is that a misprint? Fourth, from your experience with him, was Jaco truly inspired, or was he frustrating to work with? And finally, is there any advice that you can pass on to an aspiring professional?

Vince Marcos

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

A. Your question takes me back to over ten years ago, when Weather Report toured the U.S. (autumn of 1978) and recorded four shows of that tour, resulting in the 8:30 album. Regarding Joe Zawinul's "Black Market," I'd prefer to think of the "duel" with Wayne Shorter as more of a "duet."

That part of the tune is completely improvised. An interesting lesson that I learned from the recording of that particular performance was not to confuse complementary music-making with copy-cat music-making. In other words, in that duet, I sometimes tended to imitate Wayne rhythmically instead of providing a base, or counterpoint, to the conversation. At the time, I thought that I had "big ears," but when I listen to it now, it's a little more like I had a big mouth. When accompanying a soloist, that soloist will be counting on you to keep a point of reference for him or her to play off of. Jumping onto their bandwagon can destroy that beautiful tension and release that they are attempting to accomplish.

Enough of "true confessions"; it's a vibrant recording nonetheless, and I am glad that you like it. (The one cowbell fill was done by Jaco. He would often come over to the drum riser and play some percussion when he wasn't busy playing the bass.)

The nature of Weather Report was, often, what sounded rehearsed was completely improvised, and what sounded improvised was, in fact, written. The biggest lesson that I learned from Weather Report was to try to always compose when I play.

The "thunder" sound is actually a recording of fireworks (or cannon fire), fitting

of things I am curious about.

First, what was your monitor setup in concert? Because you are surrounded by drums and cymbals, it seemed to me unlikely that a monitor (or monitors) would be on the floor near you. I looked and looked, but was unsuccessful in finding an answer.

Second, do you run your microphones through a separate P.A./sound board than that of the guitars and vocals? Doing this would enable you to adjust the levels of your individual mic's as well as the level of the kit as a whole.

Your drumming is a source of great inspiration to me. Keep up the good work.

Taylor Bartels
Middletown MD

A. My monitor system is a Turbo/Crown, made up of two Turbo cabinets, each with a cluster of four top-end 6" tweeters, one 8" horn, one W" midrange speaker, and two

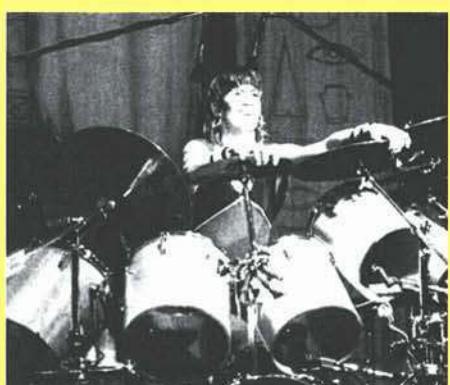
into the programmatic nature of the piece (market voices, street sounds, Caribbean port town, etc.), and that was done "live" at the show with the magic of a reel-to-reel tape recorder operated by Weather Report's engineer, Brian Riser.

Jaco did, indeed, play the drums on the title track. Jaco was a brilliant drummer, as well as bass player and composer. He had a great beat, and sometimes audacious style. The fourth side of that double album was done in the studio, and it was a fascinating few days, where there was always a tape recorder rolling to capture anything that anyone might play. Jaco just happened to be playing on my drums, when Joe walked into the studio and started to play, improvising (composing on the spot) the tune "8:30." You'll notice that the sound of the drums changes as the tune progresses. That's because there was only a cassette machine in the control room recording at the time they started to play. When Wayne and I and the engineer realized that a great piece of music was being created, the multi-track machine was turned on. By editing together the two tapes (and masking the beginning with some short-wave radio sound effects), the tune, or musical picture, was completed.

I have only this to say about working with Jaco: He was truly inspired, and is truly missed.

Finally, regarding advice to an aspiring professional, I am tempted to give you the same answer that a New Yorker gave to an out-of-town musician who asked, "How do I get to Carnegie Hall?" "Practice." However, more sage advice would be to always keep your eyes, ears, and heart open, because there's a lot to learn out there. Strive to always be as musical as possible at every stage of your development. Good luck, and have fun!

NICKO McBRAIN



Q. Recently, I was fortunate enough to see Iron Maiden in concert and to attend your clinic in Towson, Maryland. I am in total awe of your precision, power, and finesse as a musician. However, there are a couple

15" bass speakers. These are driven by three 600-watt Crown power amps. The whole thing is rigged through the onstage monitor desk, which has its own send and return line for me, with totally separate controls. The reason that you didn't see the cabinets from out front is because they were located to my left, just underneath the stage frame of the upper walkway. They also had a white scrim draped in front of them, making them difficult to see. (It obviously did the job.)

Next up is the microphones. These are run from a stage box to the out-front board, and again I have my own send/return channels on the desk. They are totally independent from the rest of the band's channels. The close miking handles the individual drums; two overheads mainly get the cymbals and control the overall level. Thanks very much for your questions and your wonderful compliments!

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S I M M O N S

IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Q. I have several old "oddball" drums of various colors that I've collected over the years. I have decided to recover some of the drums in a matching finish so that I can use them as a set. The recovering process looks to be fairly easy and self-explanatory, except for one part: How does one remove the airhole grommet and name badge and keep these pieces intact? Is there a trick or an easy way to do this? Can the badge and grommet be easily put back on the recovered shell?

K.O.

Prophetstown IL

A. When removing the airhole grommet and name badge from a shell, the best way to protect the name badge is to do all the work from the inside of the shell. Using a small chisel or screwdriver, gently pry the flared inside edge of the grommet away from the wood of the shell. Then, using pliers, crimp the grommet sufficiently to allow it to pass out of the airhole when gently tapped with a rubber mallet or a hammer covered with leather or a thick piece of fabric. The idea is not to damage the inside edge of the grommet, so it can be reused. Unless the grommet has been glued or sealed into the airhole, it should tap out readily. In some cases, it will take the logo badge with it; in others, the logo badge will need to be gently pried away from the outside of the shell. Then, you should be able to apply the new covering, drill a hole in it the same size as the airhole in the shell, replace the badge and grommet, and then use a ballpeen hammer to re-flare the inside edge of the grommet, to hold the badge securely in place. Use a drop or two of glue under the logo badge to secure it to the new shell covering and prevent "buzzing" during playing.

If the grommet must be replaced, you should be able to pick one up at a hardware store. Please note that if any of the shells you are refinishing were not covered with a plastic material to begin with, you may find that reusing the original grommet isn't practical, due to the added thickness of the new plastic covering you are applying. You'll need a slightly longer grommet to fit properly.

Q. Has anyone come up with a solution for keeping cymbals looking clean? I know there are several good cymbal cleaners on the market, but it's very aggravating to spend time getting your cymbals spotless, only to have them tarnish a week or so later.

M.W.

Franklinville NC

A. There is no perfect way to keep cymbals clean, due to the environments in which they are often used and the type of handling they receive in normal playing. However, there are a few things that can be done to prolong their clean and shiny condition. 1. After cleaning the cymbals, apply a thin coat of spray wax, such as is found in commercial kitchen cleaner/wax products like Fuller's Kitchen Cleaner & Wax or Johnson's Jubilee. Don't overdo it; the idea is to repel dust, grease, and fingerprints, not to obtain a gloss. 2. Minimize handling of cymbals as much as possible, and when you do handle them, do so with gloves or a cloth to avoid fingerprints. Oils from your skin can cause discoloration and tarnish on your cymbals. 3. Don't leave your cymbals set up when you are not playing. Between gigs, rehearsals, practice sessions, etc., always remove the cymbals from the kit and put them in appropriate bags or cases. If you must leave your kit—including the cymbals—set up, cover it completely with a sheet or blanket. This is especially important in a club or restaurant, where grease, cigarette smoke, and other elements can discolor both drums and cymbals.

Q. I have recently taken up playing drums. But by the time I get off work, the music stores are closed and I don't have time to take lessons. I have taken a few lessons, and I was wondering if you could suggest any type of study materials that could help me with my drumming. I am open to suggestions, so anything you could tell me would be a great help.

J.S.

Arlington WA

A. While lessons at music stores are often excellent, they are certainly not the only source of instruction. You might consider seeking lessons on weekends, or with private instructors who could schedule you in later in the evening on worknights. Check out ads in any local music papers you might have access to, and see if your local music stores have bulletin boards where teachers post notes announcing their availability. Even the instructors who teach in the stores might be available after hours on a private basis.

Also, there are several advertisements in MD's Drum Market classified section for correspondence courses from noted teachers. Many include cassettes, so you don't have to be a skilled reader to benefit from the courses. In addition, there are several excellent instructional videos available, and most of those are also advertised in MD's pages. These could go a long way toward helping a beginning drummer with information and inspiration.

Q. Years ago, when I was beginning to enter the bar scene, I would be rushed to set up my equipment by the people who had hired us. Most of the times this caused nervousness, which I had otherwise been warding off pretty well. What would you suggest to someone winding up in that situation?

J.L.

Sterling Heights MI

A. The easiest way to avoid a problem is to arrive early enough to have abundant time to set up. When you know you have plenty of time, you can set up calmly, and can also deal with any unexpected circumstances.

When an employer rushes you to complete your setup, you are faced with a situation that is somewhat political. There is nothing to be gained by antagonizing this person before the gig ever starts. So it is to your advantage to cooperate as much as possible (and reasonable). In some cases, the employer may have a valid reason for rushing you. It might make your life easier to find out what that reason is and to show the employer that you share his or her concern. (For example, it might be that the employer is only worried about a propped-open door letting cold air in. You could make a lot of points by expressing your willingness to leave it closed and open it only when you are actually coming or going.) Even if the employer is simply the nervous type who just has to push things, you're often better off to accept the situation and at least appear to be cooperating to the best of your ability.

On the other hand, you are a professional, hired to do a quality job. You are entitled to a certain amount of respect and cooperation, too. If the employer seems to be rushing you unjustifiably, you might point out—tactfully—that you need a certain amount of time to set up your instrument properly in order to be in a physical and emotional condition to do the kind of job that you know the employer expects. Remember, make the point that you are concerned with the employer's best interests.

In some extreme cases, you simply have to have enough self-respect and confidence to ignore unreasonable prodding or aggravation. Just don't respond by being deliberately rude or uncooperative; that only exacerbates the problem. Set up as quickly as you can while still maintaining your emotional equilibrium, and get into the music.

Q. I would like to know where I could purchase Patrick Moraz's and Bill Bruford's album, *Music For Piano And Drums*. I checked in local record stores, but they didn't have it and couldn't find it in their catalogs to order it for me.

T.T.

Fayetteville NC

A. The album is on the Editions EG label, catalog number EGED-33. It is distributed in the U.S. by JEM Records, 6600 River Road, West New York, New Jersey 07093. Perhaps with this information, your record shop might be able to order a copy for you. Otherwise, we suggest you write to JEM and ask how a copy could be obtained.



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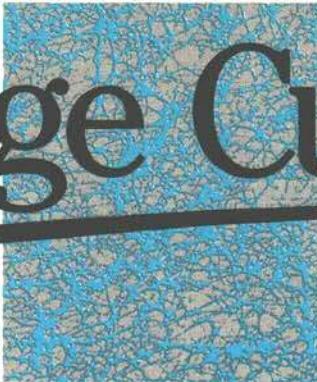
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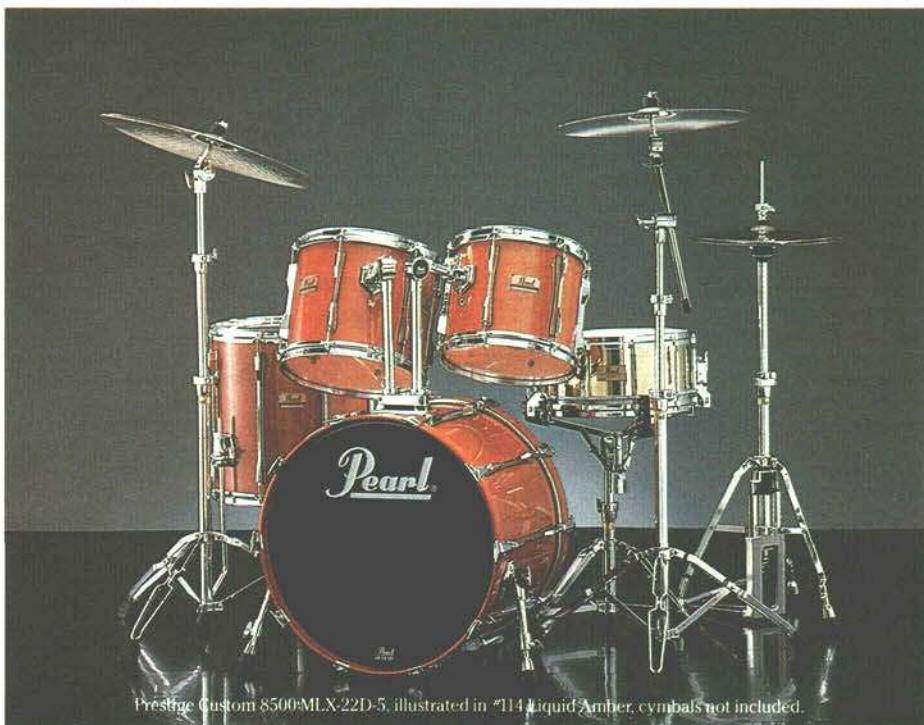
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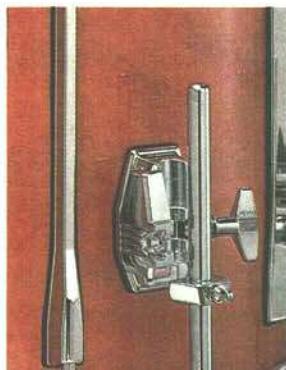
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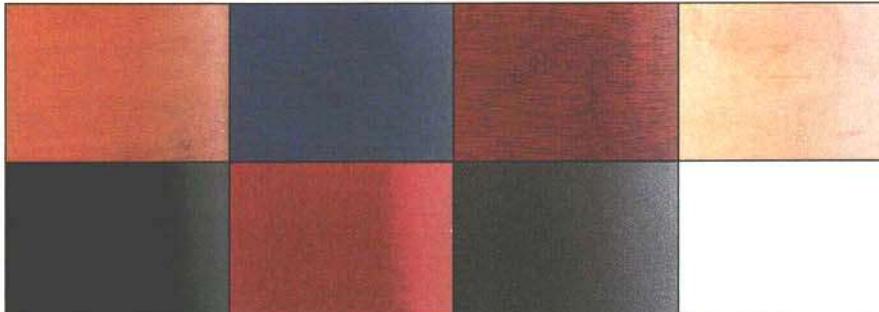
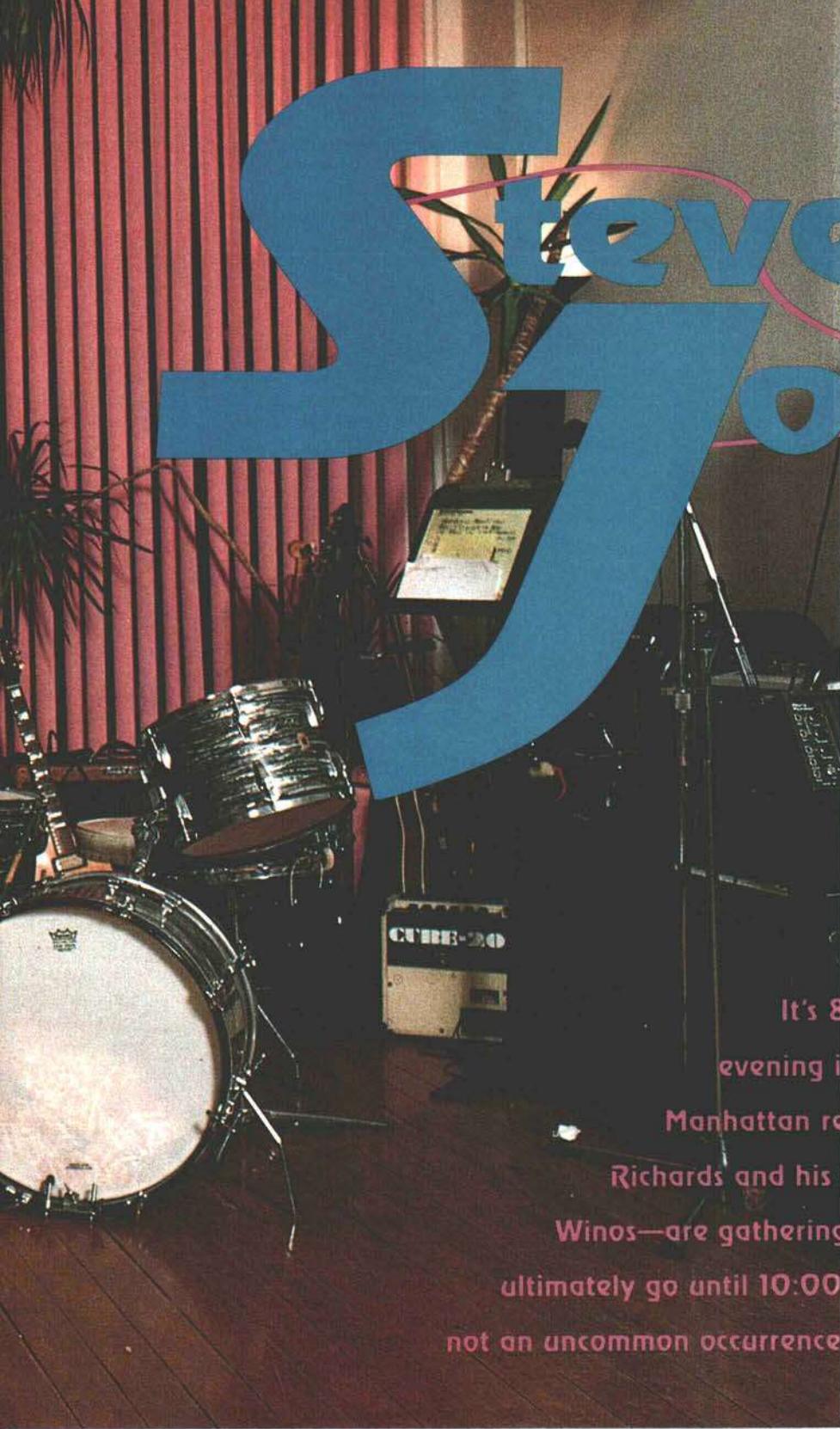




Photo by Ebet Roberts

by Rick Mattingly

Steve Jordan



It's 8:00 on a Wednesday evening in November, and inside a Manhattan rehearsal studio, Keith Richards and his new band—the X-Pensive Winos—are gathering for a rehearsal that will ultimately go until 10:00 the next morning—not an uncommon occurrence for this band.

They listen to it a couple of times, then try it. Jordan isn't satisfied. One of the notes they're singing isn't right. They listen to the CD again and then try a couple of different voicings. So far, Richards has been content to let Steve run things, but finally he suggests to Jordan that as long as it sounds good, it doesn't matter to him if it's not exactly the same as what's on the record. But Jordan is determined to find that missing note, and a couple of minutes later, he's got it.

"He's got a great ear, that boy," Richards says with obvious respect, nodding towards Jordan. "Apart from being a great drummer, Steve has a great ear for production. That's why we ended up writing and producing this album together. I've been working with him constantly for about three years or so, which is the most I've worked constantly since the '60s. With the Stones, I'd be off for a year and a half, then maybe we'd work on a record for six months, then maybe tour for three months, and then be off another year and a half. But now I've realized how important it is for a musician to keep working regularly. Otherwise, you're always knockin' the rust off."

"So the constancy of the work I've been doing since Steve and I got together has been very important for me. It's funny to think that we didn't get off on the right foot to start," Keith laughs.

Indeed, there was a misunderstanding the night Jordan and Richards first met. As Steve explained several years ago in *MD*, he was at the Blues Bar one night, and Dan Ackroyd was there with a tape of the recently completed *Blues Brothers Made In America* album. When he played the tape, Richards walked over and said that it sounded like a jazz drummer. Jordan's feelings were hurt.

"I didn't know Steve was there," Keith says. "It was the first time we met, about nine or ten years ago. And it wasn't a putdown, but he took it as a putdown. I was just kind of teasing Dan, you know. 'What's this, man? You and John pretending to be Sam & Dave, and it sounds like a jazz drummer on there.' To me, that's a compliment. The important thing is that a cat can swing. I mean, rock's okay, but I'm more interested in the roll."

So why were Jordan's feelings hurt when Richards called him a jazz drummer? "It was just the way I interpreted it at the time," Steve says now. "I guess I was trying to break out of the jazz/fusion mold that I was in, and so having Keith call me a jazz drummer affected me that way at the time. But it's absurd to worry about those labels, because it all comes from the same place anyway. Of course I sounded like a jazz drummer, because if I had sounded like a 'rock' drummer, just banging out straight 8th notes, it would have been wrong for that music."

Jordan's next encounter with Richards ended on a more positive note, even though, at first, Steve couldn't understand why Keith kept staring at him. Steve was

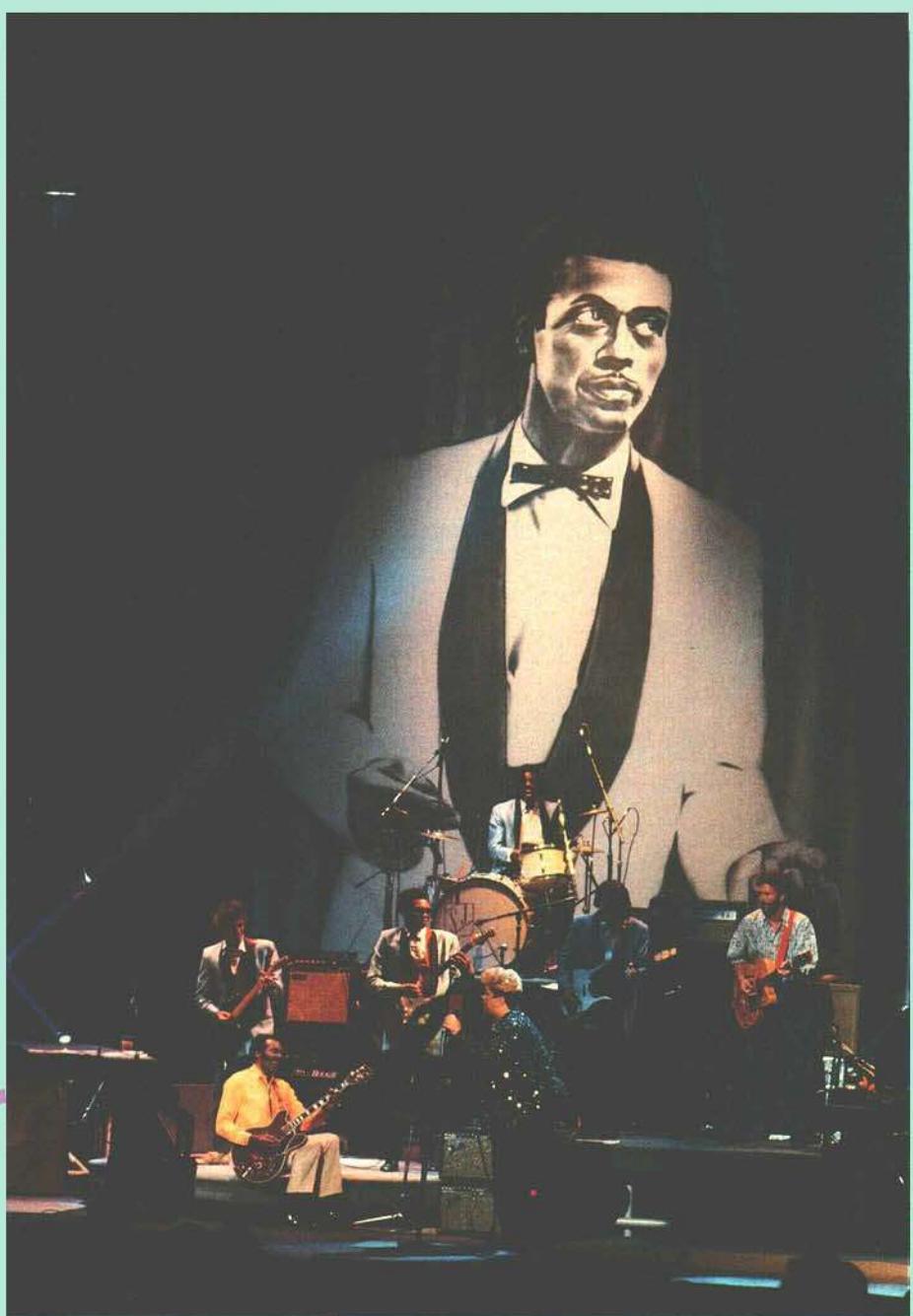


Photo by Ebet Roberts

Thus far, they have appeared in public only once, when they performed two songs on *Saturday Night Live*. Now they are preparing for a four-week tour that will begin in two weeks in Atlanta. Keith is determined that his concerts will not be "a Rolling Stones show with a fake band," as he had labeled Mick Jagger's recent solo tour. Instead, he was going to rely primarily on material from his new album, *Talk Is Cheap*, along with material that was recorded at those sessions but not used. There would be a few Stones songs here and there, but they would mostly be some of the more obscure Stones material.

Tonight's first order of business is to work out background vocals on four of the *Talk Is Cheap* songs. While Richards idly strolls around the room playing riffs to himself on a battered *Telecaster*, Steve Jordan polls the other members of the band about spe-

cific songs. "Can you sing background on 'Whip It Up'?" he asks Ivan Neville, the keyboard player. "I'd rather not," Ivan responds. "I've got some tricky stuff to play on that one." "Okay," Steve says, turning to Charley Drayton, who's sitting in the corner holding his bass, waiting for something to happen. "You'll have to sing on this," he tells Drayton, and then makes a notation on a notepad that has a familiar-looking tongue-and-lips logo at the top.

A few minutes later, Jordan calls everyone together to work out the harmonies. Richards and Waddy Wachtel strum guitars softly while Jordan assigns parts to himself, Wachtel, Drayton, Neville, and Sarah Dash. They go through a couple of tunes quickly, but run into a problem with a single background chord on "Make No Mistake." Jordan asks the engineer to find that spot on a *Talk Is Cheap* CD and play it for them.

still the drummer on *Late Night With David Letterman*, but he had taken some time off to go to Paris and record with Arcadia, a Duran Duran offshoot with Nick Rhodes, Simon LeBon, and Roger Taylor.

"It was a happening time in Paris," Steve recalls. "A lot of bands were there recording: Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock, the Stones, Eurythmics...a lot of music going on. So I'm recording with Arcadia, and one of the guys on the Duran crew knew someone on the Stones crew. All the crews know each other. I had become friends with Charlie Watts when the Stones played *Saturday Night Live* back around '79. It was my last show, actually. So the guy on our crew called his friend on the Stones crew and said, 'Steve Jordan's here, and he'd like to talk to Charlie Watts.' I spoke to Charlie and said, 'I'd love to see you.' And Charlie said, 'Okay, come to our session tomorrow night.'

"The next night there was a full moon; it was fantastic. I don't speak French, and I'm trying to explain where I want to go to this cab driver, and he barely gets it. And then when we get there, the studio is actually off the street that I was given directions to. So the cab driver just rides up and down the street for a while, and finally he tells me I have to get out. He lets me out in the middle of, like, *nowhere*, as far as I'm concerned. I go to a call box, and they're all broken; they've been vandalized. So this is a nightmare! I'm walking around in the middle of this neighborhood outside Paris, it's freezing cold, I can't get a cab, nobody's going to pick me up—I know I'm going to get arrested, right? So I'm walking around and walking around, and all of a sudden I see this light in the distance. So I walk "around the block and go up to the glass doors of this building, and I can hear the Stones playing inside. I literally started crying; I couldn't believe that I had made it, and even standing outside, the band sounded great.

"A guy lets me in, and I'm the only one there except for the band, the engineer, Keith's father, and Ron's wife. They were set up live playing this reggae groove, and it was like I was at a private concert. They were facing me, and it was unbelievable.

"Then they came into the control room—except for Mick, who stayed in the studio doing whatever he was doing—and Charlie introduced me. They were so warm; it was like I had known these guys forever. Later that night I ended up playing a little tambourine. The next night I played tambourine and bass drum, and it just progressed until I had a kit. And Keith would stand right in front of me and play. It was freaking me out. I would look up, and he would be staring right through me. I was thinking to myself, 'Just stay in the groove, man.'"

What Steve didn't realize was that he was getting Keith's seal of approval. "I'm a rhythm guitar player," Richards explains. "I mean, I love a good solo, but I find playing rhythm a lot more interesting, and the best

thing is when you can look over at the drummer, and look him in the eye, and just lock in. When you've got a drummer who's on, then a rhythm guitar player can really get to work. And Jordan's on, man. He's on."

The next thing Steve knew, he was getting phone calls from Keith. "I would be at my Arcadia session," Jordan recalls, "and Keith would call and say, 'Steve, you're coming down tonight, right?' And he would send a car for me. So I would leave one session and go right to another session. I was doing about 20 hours a day between the two of them, but it was one of the most fun times I've ever had recording."

The association with Richards continued in New York. "Woody [Ron Wood] really solidified the thing," Jordan says. "He had a little studio in the basement of his brownstone in New York. Charley Drayton gave him a set of drums, so a lot of times Charley, Ron, Keith, and I would jam all night. That's when Keith and I found out that we had something happening, but we didn't know that we would be doing anything together. We were just happy that we had each found some guys who wanted to play."

But changes were in the wind for both of them. The Stones sessions that Steve participated in led to the album *Dirty Work*. Richards was assuming that the Stones would tour to support the album after it came out. "And then Mick said he ain't going to tour behind *Dirty Work*," Richards

says, shaking his head as if he still can't accept the fact after four years. "And I built that record to go on the road. So when that happened, the most frightening thing to me was that I didn't know who I was going to work with, because Charlie Watts is like me drummer, you know? So if I wasn't going to work with him, then who was I going to work with?"

Meanwhile, Jordan had been feeling dissatisfied with his gig on *Late Night* for some time. "I felt that I was ready for another phase of my career," Jordan says. "I couldn't go on doing that. The more unhappy I became with it, the more communication broke down in the band. And one thing that was in the forefront of my mind was that I knew a lot of people were watching who admired what I was doing, and I didn't want them to see me in a situation where I was unhappy.

"It was funny," Steve continues. "When I first started doing the show, it brought me to a lot of people's attention—'Oh, you're doing that show! Great!'—and that brought on a lot of extracurricular activity at one point. But then it turned full circle to, 'When are you going to do something else, man? Are you just going to do that show all your life?' I couldn't just keep playing those same songs over and over every night. There was no purpose. Granted, those were my favorite tunes; I picked most of them that we played on the show. But after four years, it was starting to go nowhere."



Photo by Ebet Roberts

One incident in particular caused Steve to realize that the end was near. "One night," Jordan says, "we were at Woody's jamming into the early hours. At one point we were playing 'Paint It Black,' and we must've played it for an hour. We just kept playing it, over and over, and the more we played it, the more Keith remembered what he had played on the original record. It was just great. So then I went home to get a few hours sleep, and when I woke up, it was time to go to the show. But I just didn't want to. I was like [whines in child's voice], 'Noooooo, I don't wanna gooooo.' But finally I got up and went to the studio. I got there about 15 minutes late, and the *Late Night* band was already rehearsing. And the song they were playing was 'Paint It Black.' I almost died. I said, 'Hold it, God. What are you trying to tell me?' So I got behind the drums and started playing, but...."

It didn't feel quite the same as it did with Keith and Ron Wood? "Yeah," Steve laughs. "So I realized that my not wanting to do the show wasn't a matter of me being lazy or being burnt from staying up all night. It was the difference between doing something *real* over here, and then I come to the show and.... I mean, I don't want to give the wrong impression. I had a lot of fun doing that show. We did something that had never been done before, and for the large percentage of the time, I had a wonderful time. And even when I was getting frustrated at the end, I was still playing like I was having a great time, because I love playing. In fact, sometimes, the more pissed off I got, the better I played," Steve laughs. "So I definitely had fun, but I got out at the right time. It wasn't ugly or anything when I left.

"The afternoon that Paul [Shaffer] and I decided to part, I walked out of the room and I had a phone call. It was 'T-Bone' Wolk, the bass player from Hall & Oates, and he wanted me to play on a soundtrack tune with Mick Jagger for *Ruthless People*. Right away, as soon as I walked out of the room, I got a gig. So I was cool," Steve laughs. "That kind of summed the whole thing up. I wanted to be making music in the present, not living in the past."

So all of a sudden, Jordan no longer had *Late Night*, and Richards, likewise, didn't have the Rolling Stones. "We kind of looked at each other," Keith remembers, "and said, 'I ain't got anything to do; have you got anything to do?' 'No man, I ain't got noth-

ing to do.' And then out of the blue this thing with Aretha came through."

Whoopi Goldberg had just finished making a movie called *Jumpin' Jack Flash*, Aretha Franklin had been booked to sing the title song, and Keith was asked to put a band together and produce the track. "I remember flying to Detroit with Keith," Jor-

dan says. "That's—was coming in to do a session, along with Eddie 'Bongo' Brown, who played percussion on a lot of that stuff. I was pumping them for information about some of those classic tracks, and we talked about Freddie Waits a little. So it had already turned into a magical event before we even played a note."

"The next day, we cut the track, and that was really great. Then the day after that we got to watch Aretha put vocals on, chain smoking with a towel around her neck. The third day we did the video, ending up that night with me doubling for Whoopi Goldberg. She had to fly back to LA. to do a movie, so that scene in the video where Whoopi is running up the steps to the studio—that's me," Jordan laughs. "I remember the first time I saw Whoopi. She came by the *Late Night* set to say hello to David, and I looked at her and thought, 'She's copying my look, man.' Of course, now it's *her* look. But that Aretha session was three days I'll never forget."

One thing that Jordan will probably never forget about those three days is the bombshell Keith dropped on him near the end. "We were doing the mix for 'Jumpin' Jack Flash,'" Steve explains, "and Keith was getting ready to leave for Berry Park, where he was going to meet with Chuck Berry to discuss the upcoming concert and movie that they were going to do together. So before Keith left, I said, 'So who's going to play on this Chuck Berry thing?'—knowing full well that I was the *only* person in the world who could do this gig, right?"

Steve says, laughing. "And Keith said, 'I don't know, man. I don't think you're the right guy.' I was in shock. I didn't know whether to strangle him or commit suicide."

"That's how dumb I am," Richards laughs. "I don't believe the abuse Steve has taken from me. After telling him he wasn't the right cat, I went down to talk about the movie with Chuck and Taylor Hackford, the director of the film. We were staying at Chuck's place for a couple of days, kicking it around. Chuck had this video that someone had shot of the Rock 'n' Roll Hall Of Fame concert, and Steve was playing with Shaffer's band, backing everybody up. So we're watching this video of Chuck playing with that band. You can't see the band; you can only see Chuck. But you hear these drums, and it's all the right shit. And Chuck turns to me and says, 'What about this

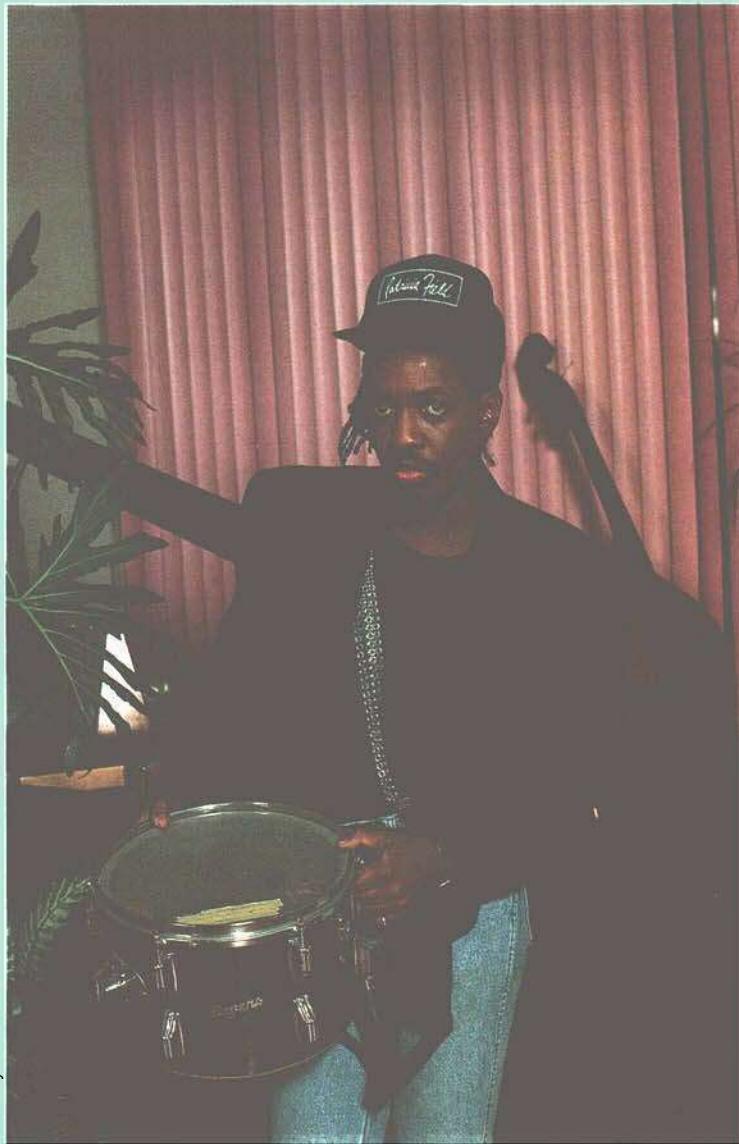


Photo by Eber Roberts

dan says. "What are we going to do, man? 'I don't know.' The main thing for Keith was that Aretha play piano. On her recent stuff, she doesn't play piano, but Aretha Franklin is one of the greatest gospel/R&B piano players of all time. Keith insisted that she play piano, and as long as she did, he knew we'd have a track. And sure enough, when we got there she knew the song in four different keys, so she was ready for anything. She came up with the bass intro and the groove—'Why don't we slow it down?' It was incredible. We did it in three takes.

"The night we landed in Detroit, we went to check out the studio. It was right around the corner from Hitsville, and both studios were used to make a lot of the Motown hits. When we got there, Earl Van Dyke—who played piano on all of those Motown

drummer?" Richards laughs, dropping his head into his hands. "Oh man, this is the guy I just told to f— off. Chuck, can I use your phone?"

"I busted Keith's chops for about two minutes when he called," Jordan grins. "But actually, I could see his logic. We were still finding out a lot about each other, and Keith just didn't know that I knew about that music. I pride myself on authenticity, but there was no reason for him to know that. From his perspective, I was too young to know as much about that music as I know."

After Richards returned from Berry Park, he and Jordan went to Jamaica together to plan for the movie. "We went down there for a couple of weeks just to groove and make music," Steve says. "We were listening to a lot of Chuck's music, pulling out some old stuff that Chuck didn't even remember. And then Chuck flew to Jamaica to meet with Keith, which was very unlike Chuck; usually, everybody goes to Chuck, so this was really something.

"The funny thing was that the video Chuck had only showed me from the neck down, so Chuck didn't know what I looked like. Keith and I went to meet him at the airport in Jamaica, and we had our *garb* on, you know? We had this real island thing happening, attire-wise, I had the dreads, and Keith and I had been tanning: He was crispy brown, and I was really, really *black*. We were definitely island people. Chuck gets off the plane wearing a suit jacket and carrying an attache case. It was really bizarre. He got through customs quick, because all he had was that attache case with like a toothbrush and a comb, and he was a little bit cranky from the plane ride. Stephanie Bennett, the producer of the movie, was with him, and she introduced us. 'Chuck, this is Steve Jordan, your drummer.' And Chuck looks at me and says, 'That's not *my* drummer. That's Keith's drummer. My drummer doesn't look like that.' It was classic."

The movie *Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' Roll* documents the rehearsals and concert that followed. In addition to Berry, Richards, and Jordan, the basic band was comprised of NRBQ bassist Joey Spampinato, saxophonist Bobby Keys, long-time Chuck Berry pianist Johnnie Johnson, keyboardist Chuck Leavell, and a number of guest artists including Robert Cray, Eric Clapton, Linda Ronstadt, Julian Lennon, and Etta James. On the surface, it might have looked as though Jordan had stepped into another *Late Night* type of situation—a house band backing up a variety of artists. But there was an important difference. "It was all Chuck Berry songs," Jordan points out. "It wasn't like we had to change the style for each person. We played the one style, and they had to change to fit in with the music. It was a very warm situation. We brought the authenticity to the music, so they were learning stuff they didn't know. I mean, the version of 'Living In The USA' that Linda Ronstadt did with us was far superior to her

original version. I've never heard her sing so well. We combined something that she had done on her version—the 'I'm so glad' section at the end—with Chuck's original version. It sounded fantastic. Keith and I were listening to it the other night, actually. We played it for Dylan. It still sounds good."

Jordan has strong feelings when it comes to how Chuck Berry's music should be approached. "A lot of Chuck's gigs are disappointing, because he gets these pick-up bands that just chug straight 8th notes through the whole damn set. But his music is not like that; it was a lot more subtle and innovative, and that's what we tried to bring out. The man's sense of rhythm is amazing, with that feel that's in between straight 8ths and shuffling. Everybody in the band we put together had a full awareness of that type of playing, but there are not too many players today who have that knowledge. Not enough players want to become musicologists, in

a sense. I feel that is very important; you owe it to the music to know what came before and to have a sense of history. Since a lot of people don't do that, a lot of the gems—little key links in the music—get dropped. And then everything becomes the same. So that's why you get people playing Chuck Berry songs and bulldozing 8th notes straight through. That drives me absolutely mad. I can't listen to it.

"What you have to remember," Jordan continues, "is that that music came out of swing. They just tapered down the size of the bands a little and added a backbeat and a guitar. It's still a jazz rhythm section. The bass player is walking. Willie Dixon is the father of that style, in the sense of getting swing into rock 'n' roll. He wasn't just a bass player; he was also a singer and a writer. That's why I was talking to you a few years ago about how important it is to have an overall concept of the music, and not just honing in on what you do. If the bottom of the rhythm section doesn't have a view of what the rest of the band is doing, then the music has less of a chance of surviving. That's where you get a lot of overplaying. Finding out where the stuff came from is a lost art that rock 'n' roll people should be getting back into."

"That feel that's like back and forth between straight 8ths and a shuffle is the essence of rock 'n' roll. But a lot of kids today don't get to hear bands do that, so if they don't listen to older records, then they don't get a chance to find that out. Consequently, a lot of stiff rock 'n' roll records get made. Of course, you also get guys who can't play straight 8ths," Jordan laughs. "They make everything a shuffle."

Steve's commitment to authenticity extended to the drumset he used for the Berry project. "Chuck had a studio at Berry Park," Steve explains, "and he had a lot of stuff in there. I went rummaging around one day

and I found these old Ludwig drums that were actually used on a lot of the original records. We couldn't use the bass drum, but I pulled out a couple of the tom-toms, and they still had calf heads on them. So I used those, and then I got a couple of great snare drums. The bass drum was a 26" *Radio King*. The guys at the Percussion Center in Columbus, Ohio, and Drum Headquarters in St. Louis were great at helping me round up some equipment.

"For cymbals, I used some old K's and a small Paiste splash. The ride cymbal was a 15", I think. I can't say for sure that they

"There are no machines on this

used cymbals that small on those records, because I've never spoken about it with

All the sounds were soiled

any of the guys who recorded them. I was simply trying to duplicate the sound of those

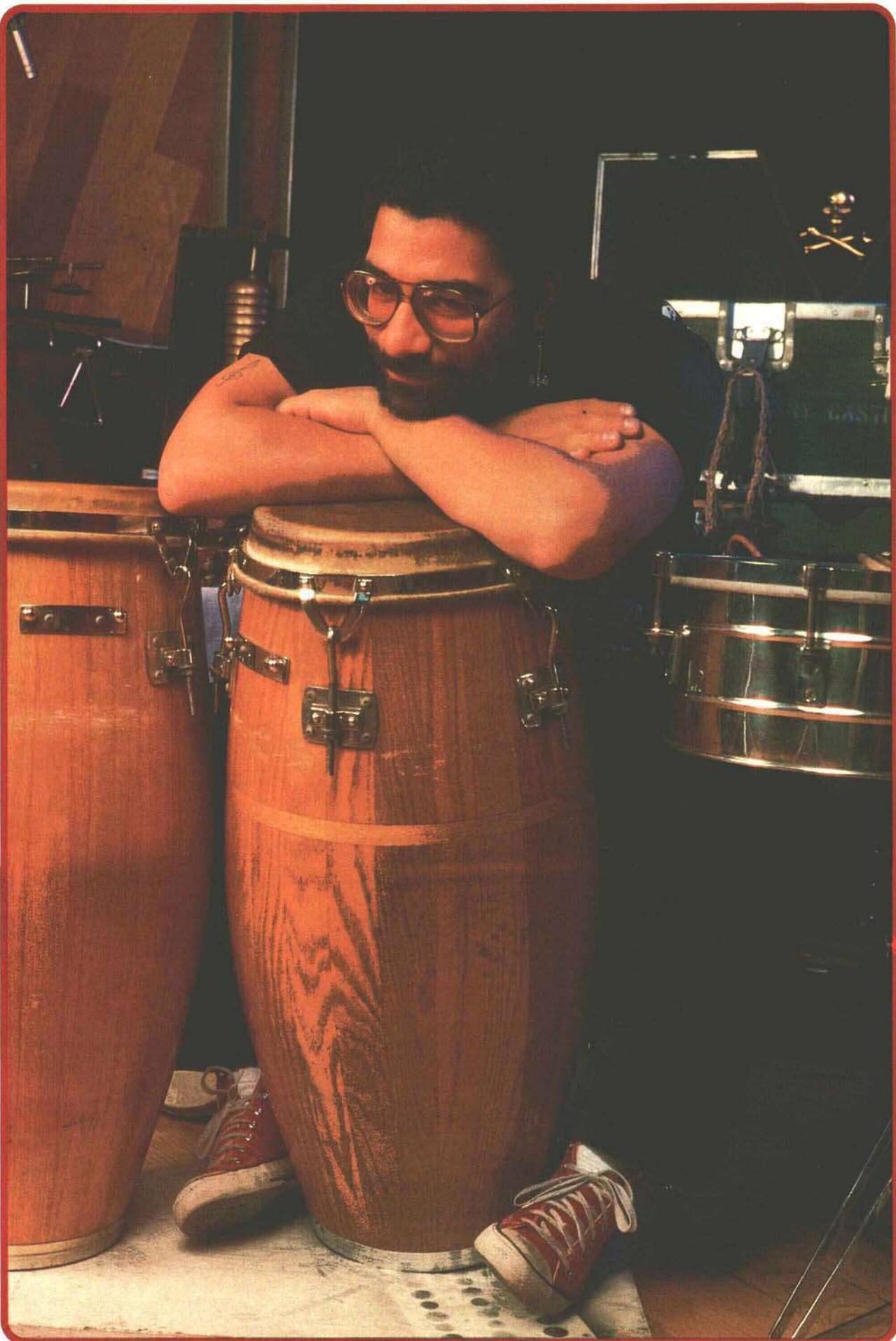
by human hands."

records. With the overhead mic's we were using, something like a 20" ride would have been too big for the authentic sound we were going for."

Besides the small ride cymbal, Steve also spent a fair amount of time riding on the shell of the bass drum. "That was my favorite part of the whole thing," Steve says, smiling at the memory. "That *Radio King* bass drum had a metal rail around it that they used to clip things onto, like cymbal stands, temple blocks, woodblocks—whatever. I rode on that for some of the stuff, which sounded really cool. Back when those records were originally made, they used to ride on anything—the rim of the snare drum, tom-toms, cardboard boxes, anything that clicked. A lot of rockabilly stuff was done that way."

One thing that Jordan fans might have missed on the Berry songs was Steve's signature snare drum crack. Again, Steve was concerned with authenticity. "Those records didn't have that kind of snare drum sound," he explains. Is that why he is seen in the movie using matched grip, rather than his usual traditional grip? Did the change of grip keep him from automatically hitting the snare drum with his usual force? "I don't consciously think about it," he replies. "The sound dictates the grip I use, so to get the sound I was going for, I just switched automatically."

Soon after the Berry project was completed, Richards secured a solo record deal with Virgin records, and work began on *Talk Is Cheap*. "Steve encouraged me more than anybody," Richards says. "Originally, we figured, 'Okay, we're gonna make this album, and I'm going to write some songs with somebody, and Steve's going to play drums, and blah blah blah.' But by the time we started rehearsing and working things out, we just looked at each other and said, 'We don't need anybody else.'



Lenny Castro

It was Lenny Castro's dream to be a drummer, but, he insists, he simply didn't cut it. At age 16 he managed a brutally honest self-assessment and decided he'd have to find an alternative. He was only slightly heartbroken, however, for he had already found that he possessed a natural ability for percussion. So he took the sticking, the drum chops, the rudiments, and the technique that he had studied on drums, and applied them to percussion.

It was obviously meant to be. Since leaving his birthplace of Manhattan and landing in Los Angeles in 1975, Lenny has carved his own notch in the musical community, in the process becoming a first-call studio player as well as a preferred live percussionist. Among the acts he has worked with are Al Jarreau, Boz Scaggs, David Sanborn, Stevie Wonder, Diana Ross, Toto, Dolly Parton, Joe Sample, Kenny Loggins, Ricky Lee Jones, Dan Fogelberg, the Crusaders, Barbra Streisand, Simply Red, and Karizma, of which he is a member.

While he is open and honest about some of the job's pitfalls and difficulties, Lenny seems to have maintained the same respect and love for the music and his instruments that he had back in his beginnings.

Giving It All

by Robyn Flans

LC: I remember the hot summer nights hanging out on the fire escape in New York City, listening to Symphony Sid and all the Latin jazz, and I used to play along with the music. Later on, when I was about 10, my folks bought me an old Kent white pearl drumset. My family moved to Puerto Rico for about a year or so, and I kept on playing. At the time, I was very influenced by the Beatles and Ringo Starr. When I came back from Puerto Rico, I met up with some guys at school, and they played me Jimi Hendrix's *Are You Experienced?* I'm going, "What?" That was the beginning of a real change in my life. Hendrix was a major force in my life as far as influence. I told myself, "This man is in total control of everything he is doing. He's got it right in the palm of his hand."

RF: You were in junior high school at the time?

LC: Right—Junior High School 99, which we used to call Jailhouse 99. The head of the music department, Mr. Just, helped me a lot. I went up to him and said, "I want to be in the senior band," and he got me in and helped me get my first real drumset—a Slingerland set. He was also the one responsible for getting me a scholarship to Mannes College; he saw my potential. He also got me into the Boro-Wide Orchestra in New York. The best of all the schools in each borough get together, and they form an orchestra and a band that performs. On Saturdays all these kids get together at 1:00 in the afternoon and play Prokofiev and Dvorak. In fact, it was through the Manhattan Boro-Wide Orchestra and Band that I got to play at Carnegie Hall when I was about 16. I was playing percussion—timpani and snare drum. Then I got the scholarship to Mannes College, so I was doing that also, getting theory, ear training, and solo snare drum interpretation. I was always told if you really want to make the bread and butter, you've got to know what you're doing. You can't just go up there and flail away. I had good people behind me—my parents, my teachers, and a few friends.

RF: What did you learn at Mannes?

LC: Serious discipline. Mannes College is a very serious musician's college, even more serious than Juilliard. After my lessons were finished, I would stay and listen to the college band and the college orchestras rehearsing. They used to do stuff where every bar was a different time signature, and the French horns were flailing away. One day, one of the percussionists was missing, and they said, "We need somebody to play



Photo by Jaeger Kotos

bass drum and cymbals," on this ridiculous piece. "I'll do it." Talk about knees buckling! But I came through; I did what I was supposed to do. It was amazing.

RF: Is this when you made the conscious choice to move over to percussion?

LC: Yes. I started realizing I couldn't play drums, and my heart just lead me to percussion.

RF: In terms of percussion, what did you study at Mannes?

LC: The one thing that really helped me was snare drum interpretation. I used to take private lessons with a gentleman by the name of Sung Kwok. He was one of the conductors for the Jeffrey Ballet's orchestra and also played trumpet and cello. I don't even know if he ever played drums, but he taught me interpretation. He taught me how to get in between the notes, how to take a line and interpret it. And who is better suited to teach somebody how to interpret than a conductor? He taught me, "This is a language; you have to see it, read it, do it, and feel it. This is just a drum, but it's much more than that." When I looked at a snare drum or a set of drums after my training with him, I looked at them differently. I didn't just see a skin with a shell and some lugs. I saw something else much deeper. That really twisted my head around.

RF: When did you get congas?

LC: I always had them. I didn't play them

at school, but I played them at home. When I was in school, congas weren't accepted as a part of an orchestra. You either played snare drum, timpani, mallets, or drumset. There was no Latin percussion; there was no per-cussion *at all*. I used to bring my congas in for big bands, but there was no training for it. It wasn't considered a part of the *Oxford Dictionary* definition of percussion. It was something you picked up on the street when you went to Central Park and hung out with the cats, or when you were hanging out at the nightclubs. That's where I got my lessons—from watching, and from listening to Mongo Santamaria and Armando Peraza—my idol, my guru, my mentor. I love that man.

RF: Why? What is it you love?

LC: The life, the energy that he played with. My folks had a lot of George Shearing albums that he played on, and that man could take a set of bongos and just tear them up. It was ridiculous. I've had a couple of opportunities to play with him, side by side. I was working

for Boz Scaggs at a benefit in San Francisco last year, and Santana was also there and brought Armando along. I had met him a couple of times. There was one time when I was playing with Toto, and I swear to God, I felt somebody's eyes on my back. I looked back, saw him, and thought, "Oh God, as if I'm not sweating enough!" When I got off stage he said, "Man, you're great—for the race, for percussion. You're out there, you're giving it the flavor, and you're exposing the people to the Latin rhythms."

RF: Is race an issue? Is that touchy ground?

LC: I hate to really connect the two—race and music. They shouldn't be. Being Hispanic, I have to admit, you're always going to come across pitfalls as far as the racial issue goes—even in music.

RF: Latins are known for the rhythms in their musical culture. In percussion I would think that being Hispanic would have always been a plus. Have you ever encountered minuses because of your background?

LC: There was one instance where I auditioned for Buddy Rich's band, and I played my ass off, but I was the wrong color.

RF: How did you know that was the problem?

LC: Buddy Rich had a way of making things very, very clear—if not verbally, then in other ways. I still have the utmost respect for the music he's played and the musicians he's influenced, but.... I've had to

deal with the racial thing, but I just put it aside. It's something that should never, ever get in the way of music or your wanting to be a musician. But there are great percussionists of all races. Joe Lala, for instance, is an Italian who was brought up in Florida and hung out with the Cubans. That man has got a lot of grease, but the man can play some shit.

I have noticed that certain races approach percussion in certain ways. The blacks approach percussion in a different way than I do or whites or others do. It all goes back to roots.

RF: How is the Latin approach different from other forms of percussion?

LC: It's not an instrumentation thing—what you would play and how you would play it. It's just the attitude. When you walk through Harlem, you dress like you belong. That's basically street sense. When I play, I don't take the Latin approach all the time. I've learned to customize my parts for certain musics. I've played the Latin rhythms with rock bands, but sometimes you can't just stick a raw Latin rhythm into something like that. You have to customize your part.

RF: What would you play with a power rock band?

LC: There are a lot of different things you could do. There are the timbales, which you can get real heavy in, or the congas, if you have the balls and the hands to stick it out, and you're used to pain. It also goes back to my appreciation for all types of music, not only for Latin music, but for rock, pop, and classical. I love it all, so I want to play it all, and if I want to play it all, I have to make sure that what I do fits.

RF: I would like you to take specific situations, live or recording, and talk about the different roles you would play as percussionist.

LC: There are a lot of different people I've worked with. Let's take Dan Fogelberg: As far as percussion goes, most people would say, "Percussion on Dan Fogelberg?" I just used a lot of tambourine, finger cymbals, triangles, congas, and timbales. I didn't have to play as hard, but I had to think a lot more to play less. I always consider myself the chef, the guy who doesn't necessarily chop up the onions or mix the soup, but the guy who comes around sniffing, saying, "It needs a little bit of this. It needs a little bit of that. That's fine. Leave it alone." I'm not really into the overbearing kind of thing. I'm more into enhancing what's already there, as opposed to becoming a major part. Although, if somebody wants me to be a part, I can do that. I can shift into gear and go out front, like with Karizma.

RF: Can you be specific about some of the different roles you've played in other situations?

LC: With Toto, I took part in things like the forming of "Africa," but I can't say I had that much input. Usually, I'm told to do a

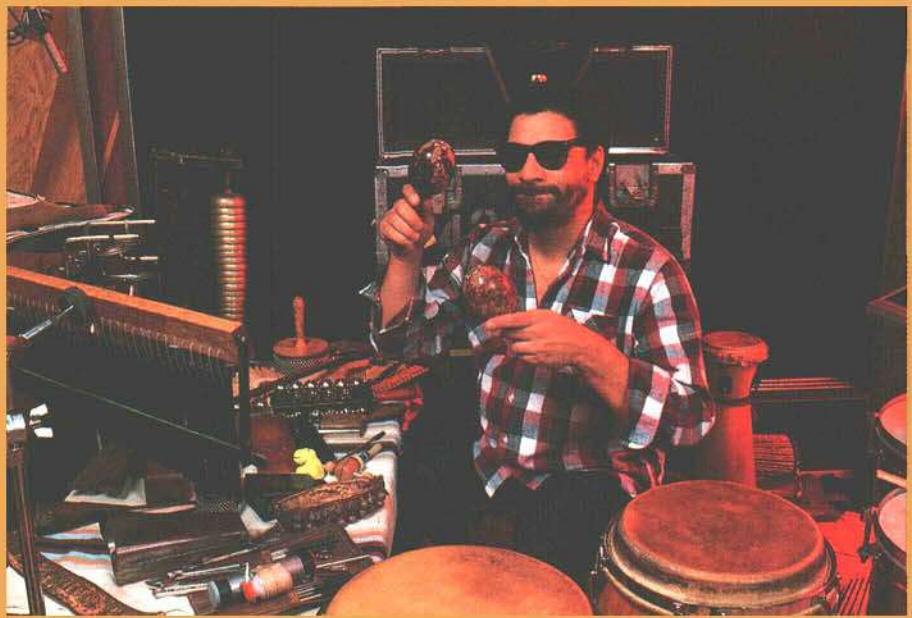


Photo by Jaeger Katos

certain thing. Very rarely would they say, "Just do what you think." Depending on the producer, some people already have a part established in their brain, so you have to give them what they think is tailor-made for them, and you have to be the tailor to make it. With Stevie Wonder, that stuff is already established on tape, so you pretty much stay within those borderlines.

RF: More specific situations.

LC: Ricky Lee Jones.

RF: I've talked to drummers about her, like Carlos Vega and Jeff Porcaro.

LC: And I was present for all of it. There was Art Rodriguez and Steve Gadd, too. It seems like I was the one constant denominator.

with all the other cats and make sure, number one, that the groove is there at all times. With Karizma, I'm one of the main components that makes up the music.

RF: Is there a lot of soloing involved in the Karizma situation?

LC: Oh yes, lots of soloing. That in itself is a serious craft. It's an art.

RF: What, to you, is a good percussion solo?

LC: [laughs] What to me is a good percussion solo? My God! We can rephrase that question to "What is a good solo, period?" It's something that makes sense—a conversation. Taking it back to percussion, I don't like to hear cats flailing: "This is a lick that I know, this is another lick that I know." It all

goes back to my training with Sung Kwok. Interpretation—you've got to make sense. We're dealing with a drum, something that is so barbaric, so simple, one of the first instruments known to

man—the thunder in the sky, a tree falling down. We're dealing with a very primitive instrument and we've got to make this thing sing. If we're going to solo on it, we'd better have something to say, and it better make a lot of sense. It's like giving a speech. It has to be set up, and then *bam* in the middle, and then brought down. There are a lot of different approaches as far as soloing. I like to solo and I want it to make sense. I don't just want to show you my wares.

There are a lot of different ways of approaching a solo. It can be the old theme/variation thing I learned in my classical training, where you start off with a main theme—a lick, a rhythm—and you just add to it or take away from it. That becomes your focal point, and you build. You have to start with something. Sometimes you can start with just a roll and build it up. It has to go somewhere. It's like a conversation where everything has to make sense, and

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TONY

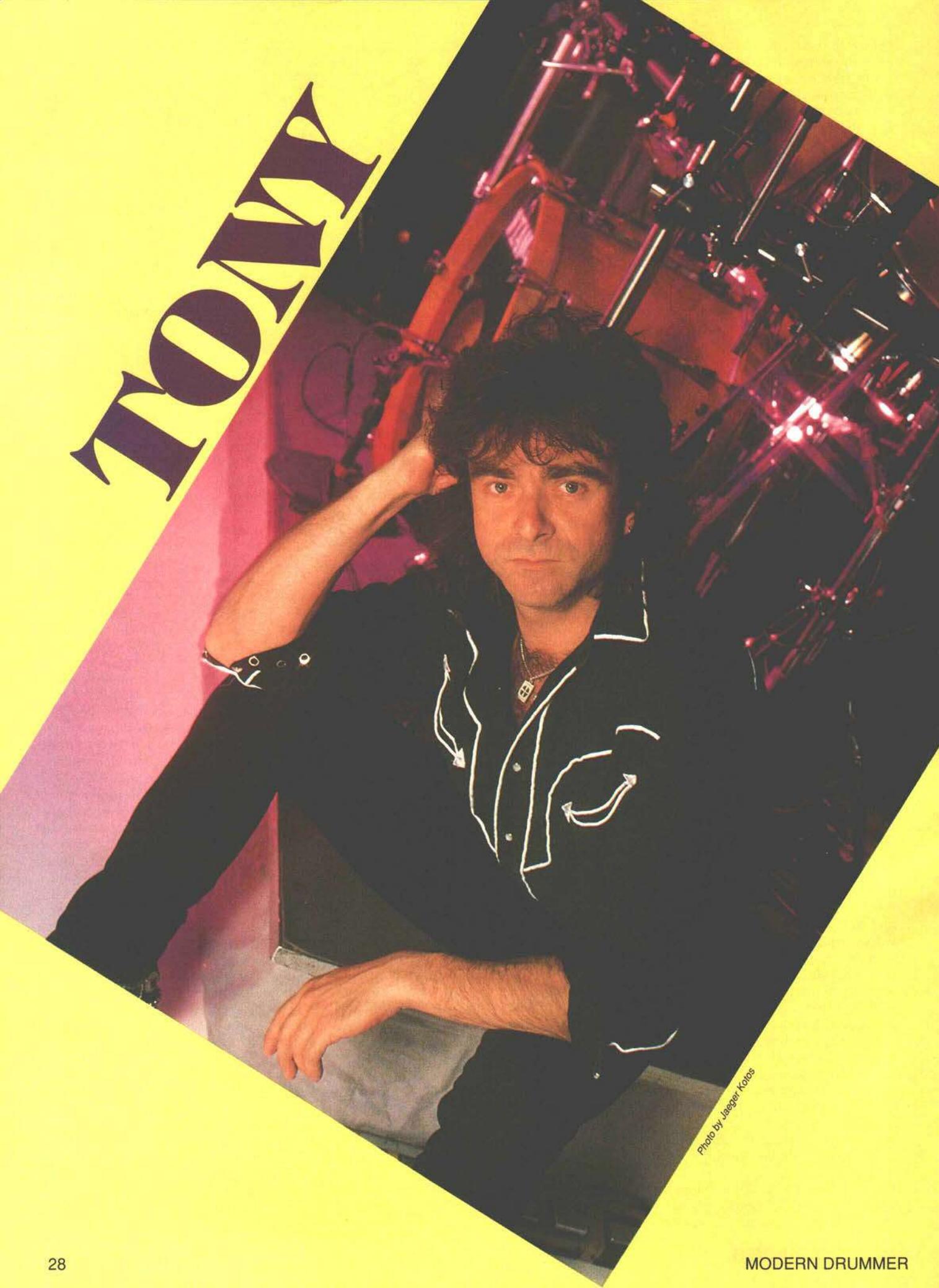


Photo by Jaeger Kotob



The house lights fade and the filmy curtain embracing the stage retreats, as you hear the opening notes to "The Stripper." Rod Stewart's band is revealed, positioning themselves for what's to follow.

Out comes the ever-strutting, husky-throated crooner himself, kicking things off with tracks from his chart-busting '88 release, Out Of Order, followed by sparkling renditions of classic Faces and early "Rod the Mod" material.

For the next two and a half hours, Stewart's almost entirely revamped band rips through the numbers at a fevered pitch, while covering the slower, touching ballads tastefully and elegantly. But clearly, and rather unexpectedly, it is the drummer, Tony Brock, who unintentionally steals the show right from under his bandmates. Brock comes out gunning from the get-go, and doesn't signal for a ceasefire until the last chord of the final encore bellows throughout Madison Square Garden.

The flame that Tony has for his playing burns so fervently that it reaches out to you across the arena, almost blowing you out of your seat. He plays as hungrily as a newcomer. But Brock's no neophyte:

He's been blasting his full sonic force since the early '70s—first with the Babys, then on sessions, and, for the past eight years, with Rod Stewart.

Soloing, he has the entire crowd of 19,000 on their feet, dancing, cheering, reacting to his exhilarating performance. He has won them over completely.

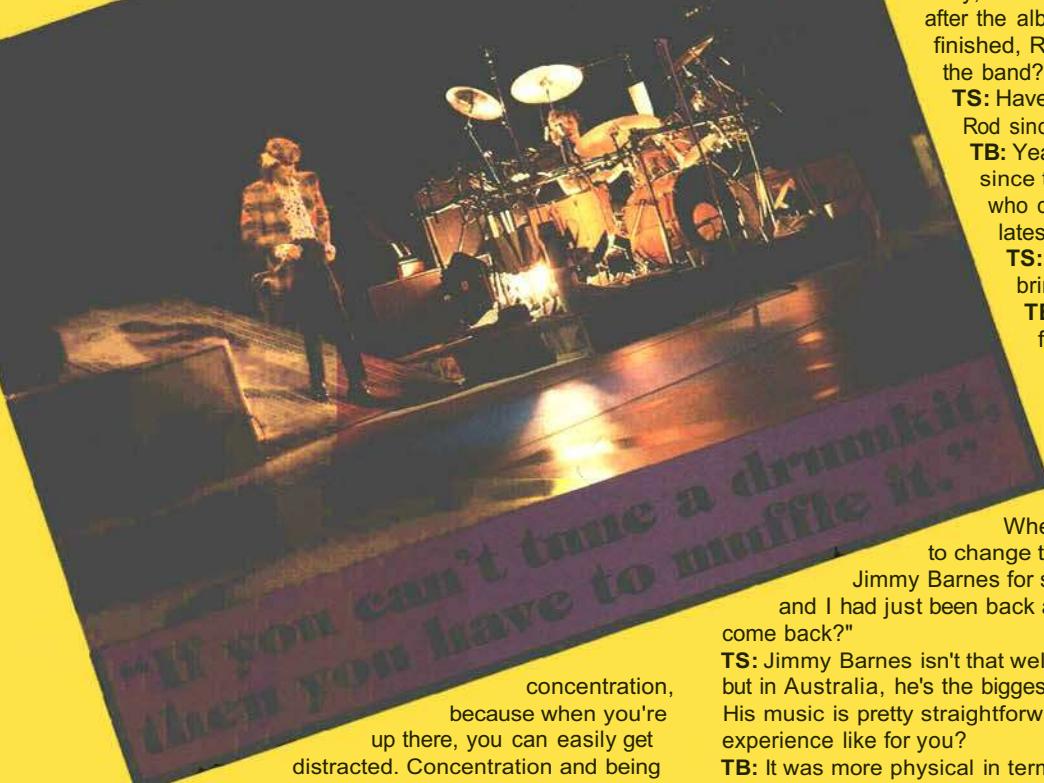
Tony's drumming has thus far been vastly under-acknowledged. Perhaps that has to do with the formats he's played in over the years. Or perhaps it's because he's one of those all guts, no glory hard rock drummers who just gets in there and does his thing without pomp and circumstance, but with pure firepower and control.

by Teri Saccone

TS: Is there one aspect of playing you can cite that has been the basis of your personal approach to drums?

TB: The biggest thing to conquer is

Photo by Jaeger Kotos



concentration, because when you're up there, you can easily get distracted. Concentration and being totally involved in what you're doing require practice—becoming *part of* the drumkit. One

thing I've recently learned is that practicing martial arts is great for concentration. I don't do it for self-defense, but all the stretching is great for the muscles and drumming. Part of it is the concentration behind it. So I've been able to use that, especially in the drum solo.

TS: You've had a varied background, which makes me wonder whether what you play with Rod Stewart is your own personal style or if it's his direction.

TB: That's me. A lot of it is simple and straight, but there's a definite art to it. It's the English feel: the trick of being able to push the band along with the hi-hat and the kick drum, with the snare drum just a little bit late, so that it swings. Most people call it the English feel, although it originally came from America, from the soul guys. But we took it, and we just seem to keep it going. **TS:** The key to that feel is holding back a fraction on the snare?

TB: Yes, that makes things swing a bit better. Most American drummers are right on the money all the time, which I can do if I need to, but I like laying back a bit on the snare drum.

TS: How did your relationship with Rod begin?

TB: I've been with Rod since 1981, but I've known him since 1974, when I was in a band called Strider, who were pretty big in England. We went on tour with the Faces that year, and that's when we got to know them. Then in '76 I was asked to join Rod's new band, but the band I was in, the Babys, had just signed a record deal two days before, so obviously I couldn't do it.

I did a session for Rod in '81. I was only supposed to come in and do two songs, and I ended up doing 90% of the album. When it was finished, Rod called me up and asked me if I'd like to join. The Babys had just split up, so it worked out well.

TS: Hadn't Carmine Appice been involved with Rod's band for an extended period of time when you joined?

TB: Basically, I had been brought in to do a session at that time in Los Angeles, and the strange thing was that Carmine was there; it was his gig. Being asked to come in, I didn't realize that Carmine

was going to be there and I didn't even realize that Carmine was still part of it.

TS: That must've been extremely awkward.

TB: It was very awkward for me. And I'm sure it was very awkward for Carmine. We're still friends, though. In the beginning it was a little sticky, but it worked out okay. Three weeks after the album—*Tonight I'm Yours*—was finished, Rod just said to me, "Will you join the band?"

TS: Have you been the only drummer with Rod since then?

TB: Yeah, I've been his only drummer since then, up until Tony Thompson, who came in for some tracks on the latest album, *Out Of Order*.

TS: What precipitated the move to bring Thompson into the sessions?

TB: We worked on *Our Of Order* for nine months—almost the whole of last year. Then we took a break, and I went down to Australia to work with Jimmy Barnes. In the meantime, Rod needed some more tracks, so Tony came in and did them.

When I came back, Rod had decided to change the whole band. I did a tour with Jimmy Barnes for six months, which was incredible, and I had just been back a week when Rod said, "Will you come back?"

TS: Jimmy Barnes isn't that well known outside of his homeland, but in Australia, he's the biggest selling performer in the country. His music is pretty straightforward rock 'n' roll. What was that experience like for you?

TB: It was more physical in terms of power. He has so much raw energy; it's like AC/DC, where if you stand in the audience at their shows, you can't get away from that energy, it's so powerful. Jimmy has that same effect, and it's a pretty physical two hours, trying to keep up with that. It's intense music, and Jimmy never lets up.

TS: Were the songs consistently hard rock during the two hours on stage?

TB: We did maybe two ballads throughout the whole set.

TS: That will keep your chops together.

TB: Absolutely.

TS: How'd you hook up with him?

TB: I did a session for him with Jonathan Cain and Neil Schon of Journey and Randy Jackson, and he simply asked me if I would go down to Australia and do a tour. I thought it would be great, because Rod wasn't doing anything at the time.

TS: Do you get requests for sessions fairly often?

TB: I can't do sessions as often as I'd like to because I've been living out on the road so much, and with sessions, you've really got to be in town all the time to get the work. But when I am at home I do get a few calls.

TS: Do you enjoy recording?

TB: Yeah, I do. I love the studio, and it's quite a challenge to get those sounds together.

TS: Do you prefer that to touring?

TB: No, because when you spend six months in the studio, you want to be back out on the road. And when you're out on the road for a while, you want to be back in the studio. I do love the studio, though, especially since I've started to produce.

TS: What are you specifically involved with?

TB: I'm just starting to produce my own thing, as well as other people's projects. I've got some great engineers who I love working with.

TS: Getting back to your session work for a moment, was it difficult to get work when you were basically an outsider—being from England but living in L.A.?

TB: The Babys had come over to Los Angeles in '77 because the

album started to take off over here. We had initially come over for three months to do a tour, and we stayed because we loved it so much. But as far as sessions went, I've been lucky, because every time I've come off the road, I get calls.

TS: What was the very first session you did over here?

TB: The very first American session that I did was for Eddie Money. That was right after the Babys split up, around '80, '81. That was when I started doing a few sessions here and there, and when I did Rod's session. Basically, I had always been in my own band up until that point.

TS: Was Strider your own band too?

TB: Yeah, Strider was, and also the band before that, which was called Spontaneous Combustion, if you can believe that. [laughs] That band was produced by Greg Lake. I was about 17 or 18.

TS: It must have been an advantage to be working with such a big name at the time. Was the experience a positive one?

TB: It wasn't too bad. We were very naive then, and Greg—who

with him for a time. Up to that point, I was basically self-taught, playing with bands.

TS: It would seem that you had at least a measure of success through your first real band—Spontaneous Combustion—when you were still a teenager.

TB: To a degree we had success. We had Greg, who was still a success, but the album we did was a very slow process. We used to rehearse 12 hours a day, every day, and it was really grueling. We'd record tracks at 24-hour stretches. It was by no means easy. And our touring was the same as the way everybody's is at the beginning: truck stops, buses....

TS: Not a pampered existence.

TB: By no means.

TS: Were there any playing tips that you learned early on that you think were worth remembering?

TB: On the very simple side, one tip that was told to me when I was first starting was to pick any basic rudiment—like a double



wasn't actually naive but was still learning the ropes—worked and learned with us. The best thing I got out of it was working with Carl Palmer at that young age, "stealing" his technique from him.

TS: The "Palmer influence," if you will, is hardly detectable in your style these days.

TB: No, not at all. But it's still nice to learn that way. He got me going with all the rudiments and all the basic techniques that you need to learn. Before that, I just didn't care. I just wanted to play drums; I didn't want to know about theory.

TS: And he turned you on to that other side of playing?

TB: Yeah, which opened up a whole new bag of tricks. So when I was 18, 19 years old, I got into theory. I went to teachers, too, and I learned quite a bit from that. But I don't play like Carl, obviously.

Carl didn't actually teach me formally; we'd just sit together and talk. That built my interest in learning more, so from there, I went to a jazz drummer by the name of Tony Oxley and studied

paradiddle—and turn it around and play it on different instruments. So, instead of just learning how to play that on the snare drum, move your right hand to the cowbell, then keep moving on to the different instruments. You'd be amazed by the different sounds that come out. It's very simple, and most drummers have done this, but somebody just starting out might not know about it. It starts you out on a whole new ball game, because once you get into real complicated rudiments, you can turn things around and make everything brand new for you, which is unbelievable.

TS: Was there something in particular that drew you into drumming?

TB: When I was 12, I was friends with some guys who had a band that needed a drummer. I said, "I'll do it," and it just started from there.

TS: Had you any other musical experience previously?

TB: My mother was the musical one in my family. She used to play the piano, and she tried to teach me, but at ten years old, you don't want to know that. Then I went through the guitar phase—

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The Drummers

Paul Brochu

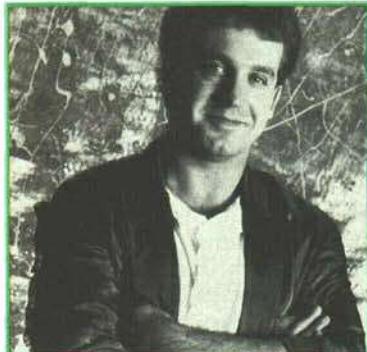


Photo by Charles Uinson

Guy Nadon

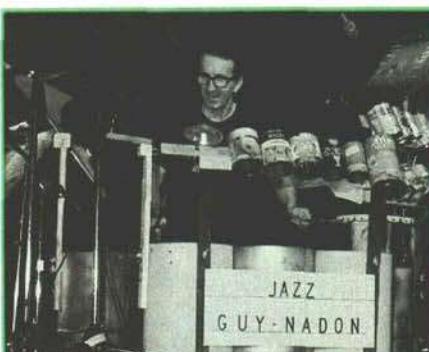


Photo by Jacques Crevier



Bernard Primeau

Richard Provencal



Photo by Regan Entwistle

PM: How old were you when you first started playing drums?

PB: I got my very first drum when I was six years old. But I started studying when I was 14 years old. I studied seven years at the Conservatory of Quebec, which is a classical school, and got a masters in percussion. Roger Juneau, the first percussionist of the symphony of Quebec, was my teacher.

PM: So you started out as a classical percussionist.

PB: Yes, but at the same time, I was playing with the big band in the school, had a quintet in which I was playing vibraphone, and on weekends played club dates. So I did different styles at the

PM: How did you get interested in playing drums?

CB: Well, I guess the rhythm was the first thing my ears caught. I was playing on pots and pans in the house, the way many drummers started. My parents bought me a snare in 1964. After I bashed on that for a year or so, my father decided to buy me a set of drums. I was 11 at that time. I was playing along with Beatles and Beach Boys records. But soon some friends with guitars and bass came along and we formed a group. I started playing professionally at 12, playing weekends and school dances and stuff. From then on, I played pop and rock music till I was about 22-23 years old, and finally got into a bit of jazz playing.

PM: Did you ever study privately?

PM: Guy, can you tell me a little bit about your background as a drummer?

GN: I was born the 29th of January 1934. I didn't like school very much, so I would always go to the theaters and the movies. I used to listen to those cats who influenced me: Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich, and the big bands, like Benny Goodman and all those. After that I set up garbage cans and pie pans like a drumset, and put on some bolts to get some good vibrations. On the first "gig" I ever played, I brought my stuff to l'le Sainte-Helene bridge. I played a few tunes like "How High The Moon," playing along on a kazoo or singing. I used to do all kinds of melodies: jazz, commercial, classical. I knew all those tunes.

PM: Tell us a little about your background.

BP: I was born and raised in Montreal, and started playing music when I was about 14 years old. I started studies with Guy Nadon. He showed me how to read, and gave me the basics. Then he sent me to the Conservatory of Montreal. I started playing nightclubs, dance music, and also for strippers. We could play a little bit of jazz, and some of the time we would play shows for singers or others acts that would come every week. That's basically how I started to play music.

PM: Was it busy in Montreal in the early '60s?

BP: Yes it was. There were a lot of nightclubs, and we could make a good living. There was a lot of jazz between the '60s and '70s in

PM: Richard, could you tell us a little bit about yourself?

RP: I was born in 1943 in a little town about 45 miles east of Montreal. I started to be interested in drums when I was about 14. I joined the school band and started practicing rudiments. I did a lot of marching band, and after that, I started playing club dates, like weddings and Saturday night dances. When I was about 16, I used to go in the clubs by the back door to watch my favorite drummers play.

PM: Where were you at this time?

RP: I was in Sorel. After that I had a friend who was having guitar



of Montreal

by Peter Magadini

same time.

PM: Were there any drumset teachers in Quebec City at the time you were studying?

PB: No, there was no teacher for drumset. I studied all the technique on snare drum and then used it on the drumset. So I just learned how to play drums by myself. But I think that's a good way to play drums, because it's very hard to get your own style when you study with a book or something like that. It's good to work with books, but somehow you have to get your own style.

PM: What drummers would influence a youngster growing up in

Quebec City?

PB: The first drummer that really knocked me out was Buddy Rich. My teacher gave me an album of this guy, and I said, "Yeah, that's great." So I started listening to his albums and playing along with him. I think everybody did that. After a while, I listened to an album of Billy Cobham's called *Spectrum*. At that time I was playing more in a jazz feel, like bebop style. When I heard Billy Cobham, I was really impressed, and I said, "That's the way I want to play drums, too." So I did the two styles: I worked hard on the bebop, and after that added a little bit of funk from Billy Cobham.

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CB: At 13 or 14 I took about three lessons with an older instructor on how to read and stuff. But the main thing that I was interested in was trying to play like the drummer with the Who. At 13 years old you tend to think that the drum teacher is going to show you how to play like your favorite drummer. He was mainly interested in getting me to play with the metronome and read the notes in the drum book.

PM: What happened after your teenage years?

CB: Well, after playing pop music for so long, I decided to take a little break. I went to the university, although not in music. But after a while I realized music was the best thing for me. That's when I first heard of drummers like Elvin Jones and Tony Williams,

and got interested in that kind of playing. Other musician friends helped me discover more good players, such as John Coltrane and people like that. So we had a little band and played bebop. That was the start of a new direction for me in music—discovering all these new ways of playing the drums. Since then, I have been pursuing mostly jazz playing.

PM: Growing up in Ottawa, did you get a chance to hear any of the people you mentioned play live?

CB: Not the big names, like Tony or Elvin. But one Canadian drummer that I heard when I was still playing rock was Claude Ranger. I heard him play with a guitar player named Sonny Greenwich in Ottawa. That sort of turned me around. This was

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PM: As a French-Canadian boy growing up in Montreal, where did you learn those tunes?

CN: I use to listen to the music in movies and on radio. My ears were developed at 11 years old. I used to know the *tunes*, not just bing-bang, bing-bang on the drums. I knew what I was doing. If it was 32 bars, it was 32 bars. If it was the blues, it was 12 bars, and with feeling.

After my Ile Sainte-Helene "gig," someone saw me in the park and enjoyed me, and asked me if I would like to play in a show. The first place was the Mocambo Cafe, near Frontenac Street. So I played in the amateur show. I played 34 tunes.

PM: Were you playing on your tin can drums?

GN: Yeah, and the quartet there accompanied me. I played in the front. We'd play three or four tunes, and after that people would say, "C'mon Guy, jump on the drums." I was happy to play on the drums. In 1947, '48, the money for amateurs was three bucks. I'd play three or four tunes for three bucks. After that I started to play a few clubs a week. With my garbage cans I'd go into the clubs and earn three bucks here, three bucks there, and I wouldn't go to school. I didn't *quit* school, but I would *skip* school. The next day I'd go to school at 11:00. But school started at 8:00. So the professor would say, "Guy, where did you go?" I'd say "I want to play *music*, man. I don't need catechism, mathematics, or those things to play music." So I continued to play in the clubs and save

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Montreal.

PM: What was the competition like when you first started playing?

BP: At that time, there was not much competition here. There were a few drummers, and we worked all the time.

PM: Living in Quebec—Montreal in particular—what drummers did you get a chance to hear live who influenced your playing?

BP: In Montreal, the first person I heard was Guy Nadon. But at that time I went to New York quite often, by bus. We used to go and listen to Max Roach, Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, Elvin Jones, Pete LaRocca, and Roy Haynes. And they used to come to Montreal, these guys. I'm talking around '64. We had a jazz club called Jazz Hot, and for a year everybody came down—John Coltrane,

Louis Hayes.... Between '60 and '70 it was quite nice. There were a lot of nightclubs, and jazz musicians could play. There were good surroundings. But then it stopped. Between '70 and '80 there was not much jazz.

PM: What happened?

BP: It was the rock situation. Younger people were influenced by rock singers. For the local jazz musician there was not much going on.

PM: Yet you were—and still are—known in Quebec and in Montreal as one of the top jazz drummers. When the situation changed and the jazz clubs began to close down, what did you do?

BP: I left and spent a year in Freeport with a good jazz player

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lessons in Montreal, and he met this guy named Guy Parent, a well-known drummer in Montreal. I learned reading from him, and got my experience in clubs watching him play.

PM: After your experience playing in clubs in Sorel, did you move to Montreal?

RP: Not yet. I was traveling. At the time, I was very interested in jazz. I must have listened to everything that was done on records.

PM: Any major influences?

RP: Oh yeah. My major influence is Tony Williams. There's Philly Joe Jones and Ed Thigpen, and of course Elvin Jones. At that time,

there was a club in Montreal called Jazz Hot, and every week there was somebody different over there. For a year, all the great players came to Montreal, and I never missed a night. At that time I was not yet earning my living with music. I was playing clubs and shows to pay for my studies. I wanted to be a technician in electronics. But the music was taking place more and more. I started to gig a lot in Montreal, mostly in the jazz scene.

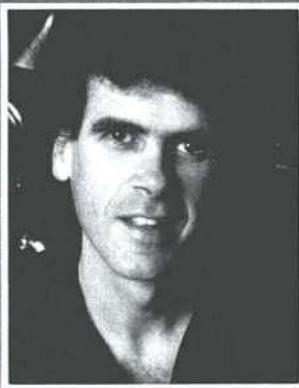
PM: Did you go on to take a degree in electronics?

RP: Yes, but when I got the degree I stopped. I went full-time into music.

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MEET OUR QUALITY

David Garibaldi



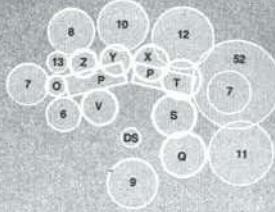
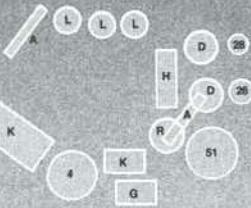
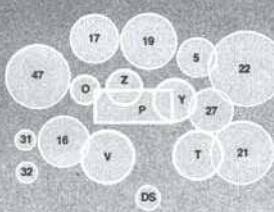
Mino Cinelu



Sheila E.



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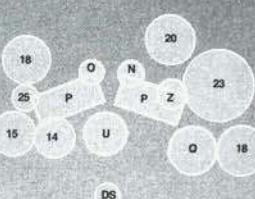
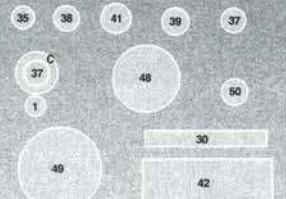
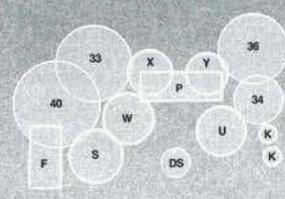
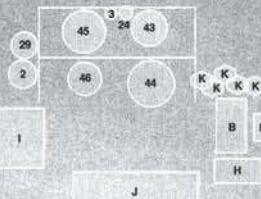
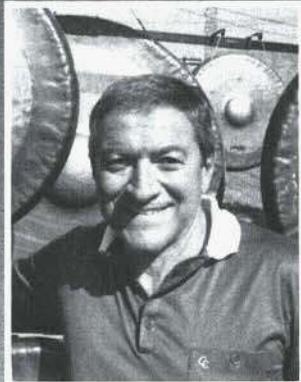
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Ed Mann

Joe Porcaro

Emil Richards

Narada Michael Walden



ED MANN

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...the Formula 602 are very sensitive cymbals, very sparkling sound...when I need another color, I can go to the 2002s...one of my favorites is the Formula 602 22" China, when I use that, I get all kinds of compliments...I love the different sounds I can draw from, to fit any musical situation...they're very musical cymbals...

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NARADA MICHAEL WALDEN

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- V — 14" Piccolo Snare Drum
- W — 14" Floor Tom
- X — 13" Tom Tom
- Y — 12" Tom Tom
- Z — 10" Tom Tom
- DS — Drum Stool

The statements in this ad are based on interviews conducted with the artists on their playing, cymbals, sounds, and on Paiste. Write to us and ask for the ones you'd like. Mention Dept. USA5. Please include \$3 for cost, postage and handling.

Select Snare Drums

Select snare drums are a new brand of premium-quality drums featuring steam-bent solid-wood shells. The company is located in Watsonville, California, and is dedicated to creating a controlled number of drums for drummers seeking—and willing to pay for—the optimum in snare drum performance.

The Select snares I tested were all 14" drums with 12 tuning lugs, fitted with Remo coated Ambassador heads. They were final prototypes, developed just prior to the line's official launch at the Winter NAMM show in January of this year. While certain minor differences exist in subsequent production models (primarily cosmetic), the drums I tested—and on which I'm basing this review—were representative of the manner of construction, overall design, and visual appearance of the Select drums now on the market.

The initial line features maple-shell drums in three depths: 4", 5 1/2", and 7". Production models are available in crystal clear (natural maple), ruby, and black sapphire natural wood finishes, as well as black, white, and red solid lacquer finishes. (I also had the opportunity to test prototype drums in birch and birds-eye maple, in such exotic woods as purpleheart, rosewood, and cocobolo, and one 4" drum in brass. The company plans to make such drums available on a custom basis as soon as the standard line is established.)

Construction

There's a lot about a Select snare drum that's different from any other on the market. To begin with the most obvious feature, Select's maple shells and reinforcing hoops are steam-bent out of solid rock maple boards. This is a difficult and exacting process that was first made popular with the classic *Radio King* drums of the '30s and '40s, and re-introduced in recent years, first by Noble & Cooley, and later by Tama and Sonor. However, Select uses a slightly different process that allows them to bend boards that have already been dried (or "cured"). Other steam-bending processes use green lumber, and then allow the drumshells to cure after being shaped and glued. Select maintains that their process allows the drumshells to be created with a certain amount of "stress-relief," preventing internal tension that might have a tendency to pull the shells out of round at a later point in their lifetime. The shells can



close to perfect as I could determine without scientific instruments, and the snare beds were equally uniform. This didn't surprise me, since I had been told that the company uses a special computer-controlled machine to cut the snare beds, and that the bearing edges were also machine-created for uniformity, and then hand-finished for quality control. I am a firm believer that the term "hand-crafted" need not exclude machine-made steps when those steps call for exact consistency and uniformity. We all know that a machine can do a job the same way every time, while a human craftsman is subject to greater variables. Where I see the advantage of "hand-made" over "machine-made" is in those stages of manufacture where judgment and evaluation must be an ingredient. (For example, the finishes are all hand-done, and are exquisite.) Select's philosophy is to combine the best elements of robotic technology with truly expert hand-craftsmanship and human supervision—which sounds like a good approach to me.

Hardware

also be a bit thicker than those of other steam-bent drums, which Select feels adds strength and resonance. These are manufacturing decisions based on the science of woodworking, and I don't profess to be an expert in that field. But I do know that houses are built with frames of pre-dried lumber so that they will be strong; it makes sense to me to build a drumshell in the same manner.

Quality control on the drums I tested was exceptional. When preparing a board to be steam-bent into a drumshell, a gradual taper is shaved onto each end. After the board is bent into a cylindrical shape, these tapered ends are matched up to form a "scarf joint," which is then glued together to create the shell. The seam created at this joint can be quite obvious if done poorly, or virtually invisible if done well. Select's seams are marvelously done; there is virtually no gap visible between the very ends of the board and the surfaces they are glued to, either inside the shell or out. Due to the fine tolerances maintained by the company, there is also complete consistency of thickness around the circumference of the shell.

The bearing edges were absolutely as

Another difference that is immediately noticeable between Select snares and other solid-shell drums currently on the market is the hardware. Select has chosen to use contemporary-looking hardware, as opposed to low-mass hardware based on the look of "classic" snares of the past. The company's feeling seems to be that it is the shell—and not the design of the hardware on it—that is the key element of the drum's sound. As a result, Select's drums have a modern look, using double-ended chrome lug casings and die-cast hoops. (A nice touch is that the "ears" on the hoops are shaped to conform to the shape of the lug, so that the overall vertical profile of the drum is consistent.) The company is also proud of the fact that all of its hardware is manufactured to its own specifications in the U.S.

As I said earlier, the drums I tested were final prototypes. As such, they had not yet been fitted with Select's own snare mechanism, which was still under development. The drums were fitted with standard side-throw mechanisms, primarily from Tama. I am therefore not in a position to report on the actual performance of Select's design. I can, however, pass along the information I

Photo by Rick Mattingly

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was given by the company as to what that design would entail. By the time this article reaches print, Select's drums will be fully developed and fitted with this mechanism.

The basic snare design will feature a simple side-throw strainer, with a matching adjustable butt. Snare will be held by tape. However, drums featuring an extended snare bridge will also be available. The extended snares will be controlled by roller beds, which will themselves be adjustable. This particular adjustment will allow the snares to move up and down in relation to the bottom edge of the drumshell, permitting future shell modifications (snare beds, bearing edges, etc.), or the use of a variety of heads (some of which have higher collars than others). Knowing how often drummers make these sorts of modifications—especially to snare drums—this seems an admirable demonstration of foresight on Select's part. (Standard-snare models will be designed so that the extended bridge mechanism can be retrofitted, if desired.)

Sound

There are a number of fine snare drums on the market today. Some have metal shells, some have composite shells, and the vast majority have plywood shells. A relative few have solid wood shells, due to the difficulty involved in making such drums. However, the acoustic advantages of a solid-shell drum are hard to dispute. Tone, resonance, projection, cut, and clarity are all properties that are desirable in a snare drum. And when you are discussing drums constructed of wood, it's a simple fact that a solid body possesses these properties to a greater degree than does a laminated one. After all, woodblocks, claves, and marimba bars are all made out of solid wood, rather than plywood, to take advantage of those very properties. It follows that a snare drum, whose projection relies heavily on the resonance of the shell, would benefit from the same manner of construction. A solid piece of wood can vibrate as a single body, whereas plywood has layers of glue acting as virtual buffers between separate pieces of wood. The scientific principles are simply in favor of the solid shell when it comes to the performance attributes that make a good snare drum.

As a result of all of the above, the solid maple Select snare drums I tested offered sound qualities unsurpassed by any snare drum I've ever heard. All the elements were there: dynamics from a whisper to an explosion (with rimshots on all of the drums that could take your head off), snare sensitivity at all levels, tuning sensitivity that allowed for a very expansive range of sounds from any given drum, warmth, depth, clarity...you know the list. I put the test models through every conceivable

application, from hard rock to bebop, with sticks of every size and brushes as well. I couldn't find anything about the drums' performance that wasn't exemplary.

User-Friendliness

A key element of a snare drum's performance that is often overlooked in reviews has nothing to do with the drum's sound. "Responsiveness" is discussed, but usually in terms of how much snare sound is produced when the top head is struck lightly. But "responsiveness" has another meaning to me: How well does the drum respond to the effort you put into it? In other words, how much of the physical energy you put into a drum does it return as sound energy? Considering that 90% of your playing is done on the snare drum, does it feel to you as though the drum is helping you put out sound to your fullest potential?

In those terms, all the Select drums I tested provided me with a sensation that I have rarely experienced when playing any snare drum. While all the subtle nuances I could ask for were present in abundance, the sheer *delivery of sound* that these drums achieved was their most impressive feature. And I don't mean that in terms of pure volume. I've played other drums—notably some with metal or carbon-fiber shells—that could get equally as loud. But the Select snare drums had the capability to play extremely loud and still retain 100% of their acoustic qualities and character. I couldn't get over the comfort and confidence these drums gave me; I had the feeling that each drum was genuinely helping me to play and project the best I possibly could. There's no way to place a value on a psychological advantage such as this, but it was a very real sensation, and one that I believe any drummer would benefit from.

The mention of "value" brings us to the subject of cost. Select snare drums are unquestionably premium drums. They are designed to be, and as such carry a premium price tag. A 4" drum lists for \$750.00, a 5 1/2" for \$795.00, and a 7" for \$850.00. (These figures are for drums without the optional extended snare bridge.) These prices may seem high, but the old adage "You get what you pay for" has never been more apt than in this situation. These drums are manufactured at a quality level as high as or higher than anything else on the market. They are unique in their construction, are manufactured at a quality level as high as or higher than anything on the market.

As we went to press, Select Snare Drums was experiencing a trademark conflict regarding its name. A new company name will be released to the public shortly.

—Rick Van Horn

continued on next page

Tama Rockstar Kit



Photo by Rick Mattingly

Tama's new *Rockstar* drumkit is the result of the company's efforts to update their entry-level drumkit line. The *Swingstar* series has existed for a few years and has been tremendously successful for Tama. However, when Tama introduced the *Granstar* and *Crestar* professional series a couple of years ago, the *Swingstar* series got left in the dust, image-wise. So the cosmetic appearance of the *Rockstar* series has been designed to be more in line with the "modernized" look of the other, higher-priced models. Eventually, the *Swingstar* series will be phased out entirely in favor of the *Rockstar*. But due to the substantial inventory of *Swingstar* kits both in retail shops and in Tama's warehouses, that series will still be available for some time to come.

Construction

In terms of basic drum construction, the *Rockstar* series is the same as the *Swingstar*. All the kits come in pre-packaged configurations, and the same kits and drum sizes that have been available in the *Swingstar* series will also be available in the *Rockstar*. The tom and bass drum shells are made of what Tama refers to as "straight-grained wood" (a somewhat vague term, I must

say), covered with a variety of plastic finishes.

There are no reinforcing rings inside any of the shells. Although the kit I tested had no internal coating, Tama informed us that production kits will be sealed on the inside with a black coating called *Acoust-Seal*. Our test kit was a five-piece consisting of a 16x22 bass drum, 11x12 and 12x13 rack toms, a 16x16 floor tom, and a 5 1/2" deep metal snare drum.

On the bass drum, the bottom two lugs for both the batter and the front head were drum-key-operated, to maintain tuning and make the positioning of the bass drum pedal easier. The drum was fitted with chromed metal counterhoops that were almost two inches deep, giving the drum the impression of even greater depth. (While this did impart an attractive, powerful look, it also made the

drum difficult to fit into my bass drum case.)

Hardware

As I said, the drums on this kit are essentially the same as those in the existing *Swingstar* line. It is in the area of hardware design that most of the changes have taken place. For example, the spurs on the bass drum have been beefed up (I found them quite efficient and solid), the lugs have all been redesigned to look a bit more modern (which they do), and the double tom mount on the bass drum has been totally re-designed. It is with this last item that I had some problems.

The double tom mount consists of a large, sculpted casting on the bass drum, which receives a single down post. Atop this down post is another sculpted casting, which holds the two individual tom-mounting posts. These are each held in place vertically by a large wing bolt. The individual posts are topped by a newly designed receiver for Tama's familiar L-post tom arms. The new receiver uses two adjustments for tom positioning. On one side, a wing bolt tightens a ratchet that controls the rotation of the L-arms on a vertical axis. On the other side, a lever controls the side-to-side rotation and

back-and-forth positioning of the L-arms. This all sounds a little complicated, but it really isn't when you are using the mount, and, positioning flexibility is quite good.

This flexibility could only be achieved, though, by taking a step that seemed to defeat Tama's cosmetic improvement. Both the casting on the bass drum and the main casting of the tom mount were sculpted identically, to relate visually when the tom mount was in place. However, with the sculpted surface of the tom mount facing front, the large wing nuts that held the individual down posts were facing to the rear—toward the toms. To achieve an acceptable angle on the toms, the mount had to be turned around, thus the wing bolts faced front. This gave more space to work with, and made the wing bolts easier to handle, since they were no longer obscured by the toms. Of course, this ruined the coordinated "look" of the tom-mount castings, but it certainly functioned better.

To be fair, it's always difficult to achieve proper angle and height adjustment when dealing with oversized toms. This is certainly not a problem unique to Tama drums. I probably would not have had quite the same problem with standard-size drums, which are available in the *Rockstar* series.

The stands that come with this kit are single-braced, and might be considered light-to-medium-duty by some people. I actually enjoyed the fact that the stands were lighter than most "pro-quality" models, and had noticeably smaller rubber feet—making them easier to position in tight places.

Tama's inclusion of only one straight cymbal stand is probably a cost-saving effort. But since a new drumset player would almost automatically have to purchase a second stand to hold a crash cymbal, it would make sense to include it in the package.

There were a few weak points in the connecting parts of the stands. For example, a spring-pin holding the cymbal tiltier to the top of the shaft on the straight cymbal stand allowed movement. The legs of the snare stand were joined at points with rivets, which had to be loose for the stand to collapse. But there was so much play in them that the stand was wobbly when set up.

The bass drum pedal was a pleasant surprise. It featured the standard Camco/DW-style single-spring yoke and axle assembly, along with a fairly oversized footboard fitted with a toe stop. The pedal was perfectly playable, with a lot of power. A laminated nylon/fabric, virtually-unbreakable strap provided the linkage. But this one had only three adjustment holes in one end, and a single hole in the other. The holes were too far apart, and the strap proved too tough to put additional holes in with a leather punch. It was impossible to get any subtle differences in strap adjustment. My suggestion would be to put a few more holes in the strap—at both ends, and closer together.

The hi-hat featured an externally adjust-

able spring mechanism. Rather than an infinitely adjustable knob, the tension adjustment is a small lever attached to the spring. Under this lever is a dial, notched in staircase levels. You lift the lever, turn the dial to select the level you wish, and then release, allowing it to sit down into the selected notch. Only five notches are provided, but those should be adequate for all but the most sensitive players. I had no trouble finding a comfortable playing tension.

Overall, this hardware is solid and usable. The lightness of the stands is an advantage, since the set is targeted at younger—and very possibly smaller—players.

Cosmetics

Tama's intention in introducing this kit was to "modernize" the look of their entry-level product, and they've succeeded. The lug shape is clean and neat without looking cheap; the hardware is tastefully designed, and the kit definitely looks better overall than the generic import drums one often sees. A wide variety of colors are available; the kit I tested was covered in Tama's Jet Black finish. A black drumkit usually looks very good under stage lights, but this one had an annoying tendency to gather dust—thus reducing its attractiveness. (Again, this isn't a problem unique to Tama. Plastic coverings can build up a static charge that attracts and holds dust particles. If you try to wipe them off with a dry cloth, you just increase the static. The only way to clean them is with a spray dusting product. So if you're considering a black kit, plan to keep a can of *Endust* in your trap case.)

Sound

Simply stated, the *Rockstar* kit offered an acoustic performance that was better than I had expected. This is, after all, an entry-level kit, designed primarily for a student's initial encounter with, and development on, a drumset. In terms of musical applications, one might figure this type of kit to be used by a young drummer in a garage band setting, at most. However, I was pleasantly surprised by certain aspects of the kit's performance under even more demanding playing conditions.

I took the kit out on a gig to see how it would measure up in a situation where certain acoustic properties were required. I discovered that the bass drum and toms had a loud, penetrating sound—something my band commented on repeatedly. The bass drum was deep and boomy (I played it with the front head in place and intact), yet still had a certain bright edge to it. I attribute the brightness to the type of material from which the shell is made. On the other hand, the drum lacked the warmth or character that a more expensive shell—such as one made of maple—would be expected to display. The toms provided lots of depth—owing mostly to their deep shells. Again, they weren't warm or mellow, but they did

have plenty of cut and projection. Fitted with *Pinstripe* heads on top and Tama 200 clear heads on the bottom, they proved to be fairly easy to tune.

The snare drum's sound was a great deal better than I had anticipated. It was by no means as crisp or sensitive as a pro-quality snare, but let's remember the price range we're dealing with. With a certain amount of work on the tuning, this snare can sound acceptable for professional use. The internal muffler caused some buzz when it was not pressed against the head. A *Zero Ring* killed the metal shell's overring quite satisfactorily.

There was a problem with the snare batter head. The logo on the head indicated that it was a Tama 200, a head actually made in Japan by Tama. It tended to loosen up and go "flat" under only moderate impact. No amount of re-tensioning could keep this head sounding good for more than a couple of songs. A quality drumhead would probably go a long way toward making the drum's performance more consistent. (I should point out that Tama plans to fit the toms with clear Tama 200 heads on production kits. They feel that these heads provide even more volume and attack than the *Pinstripes* on the toms I tested. While this may be true, I have my doubts about their durability.)

I had to apply a variety of tuning techniques on the entire kit in order to achieve the kind of sound that I find acceptable. I tend to think that a less experienced drummer—the very person more likely to be playing on this kind of set—might have trouble achieving the same results initially. But learning how to *tune* a kit is part of learning how to *play* a kit, and this kit certainly can be tuned to achieve a better-than-average sound quality when proper techniques are applied.

My overall impression of the *Rockstar*'s acoustic capabilities was that this is a kit that could be used in many situations by budget-conscious professional drummers—not just beginners. Especially where sheer volume is a major consideration (as opposed to more subtle tonal nuances), this kit could be a very cost-effective gigging instrument. And for those drummers who are just starting out on a kit, the *Rockstar* could provide a sound to be proud of—which might go a long way toward encouraging the owner to practice and improve. This much quality built into a kit carrying a suggested retail price of \$1,099 (for a five-piece configuration such as the one I tested) seems to be an admirable achievement on Tama's part. For further information on the *Rockstar* kit or any other Tama product, contact Hoshino (USA) Inc., 1716 Winchester Road, Bensalem, Pennsylvania 19020, (215) 638-8670.

—Rick Van Horn

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In Appreciation,

I've wanted to be a jazz drummer for about as long as I can remember. And, I've always been lucky to have the support of my parents and family, which came in the form of love and encouragement, as well as their providing me access to some wonderful instruction. My first teacher, a fine drummer by the name of Johnny Civera, taught me how to hold the sticks, how to read, and the beginnings of how to play the drums with a band. At the Stan Kenton Summer Jazz Camps I used to attend, I was fortunate enough to receive instruction from such drummers as Louis Hayes, Charlie Perry, and Alan Dawson. When Stan Kenton told my father that he should contact Professor George Gaber at Indiana University, Dad did so, with, as usual, great determination and enthusiasm. Gaber had recorded with Stan, playing timpani on the album *Cuban Fire*. He also had a reputation for having one of the finest percussion departments in the world, at Indiana University, Bloomington.

Mr. Gaber came to our family's house in New Jersey, at the invitation of my father, while he was visiting the East Coast on some other business. I was 10 years old at the time. I knew that I was in the presence of a very important man. His warmth, congeniality, and genuine excitement for things percussive caused me to like him right away. I played for him, and he very kindly allowed for the possibility of my studying with him in the future. A few months later, I took my first lesson from Mr. Gaber while in

Indiana at a summer music camp.

As I prepared to play something for him on the practice pad, he admonished me not to play anything "right." He said, "If you play anything right, I'll hit your hands with this drumstick." Well, imagine my confusion! I tried to play something, and, again, he said, "Don't play anything right; I want to hear mistakes." My parents were present at this lesson, and my mother must have thought this guy was *most unorthodox!* The point, and this was Lesson #1 for a young drummer, was that *it is okay to make a mistake.* He sensed my anxiety to always try to do it right.

George Gaber has done so many things right over the years that it is a challenge to chronicle them all in so brief a space as this column. Briefly, let me tell you that he was born in New York City (1916), attended the Juilliard and Manhattan schools of music, and studied percussion with Karl Glassman. His professional career saw him play virtually every style of music, including symphonic, jazz, ballet, opera, TV, and film. He performed with such organizations as the Pittsburgh Symphony, the NBC, ABC, and CBS orchestras, the Ballet Russe Orchestra, and the Israel, New York, and Los Angeles Philharmonics (under such conductors as Klempener, Reiner, Stokowski, Bernstein, et al.). And he did a whole lot of free-lance recording work in New York City.

In 1960, Gaber accepted the invitation, and challenge, to teach percussion at Indiana University, where he energetically and creatively built that department into a mecca for students of percussion—both players and composers alike. His instruction and inspiration has resulted in a most distinguished list of alumni, with former students in just about every major orchestra in the country (and rock bands! Ken Aronoff with John Cougar Mellencamp, for example). And his ingenuity for percussion instrument and accessory design was equaled only by his aptitude for maneuvering so deftly in a world of bureaucratic academia.

From the age of 11, I was determined to study at Indiana University with George Gaber. Leading up to that eventual time, he directed me to study with Billy Dorn, the great mallet player (who lived in New Jersey), and to attend the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan for high school. I was to enjoy the study of both classical and jazz percussion. All of that time, I carried my trusty lesson book with me, which contained Mr. Gaber's advice for any drummer's most valuable assets (along with the ears): the hands. Mr. Gaber taught me that all drumming is made up of three basic strokes:

1. The single stroke
2. The double stroke
3. The flam

Below is a list of some of the essential drumming rudiments that I worked on, and that you should be able to play. I recommend practicing on a practice pad. The things that Gaber would watch out for are the same things that I'll pass on to you: strive for evenness in both hands, regarding stick height, stick angle, and sound. Play relaxed, and practice at different tempos and dynamic levels. You could also practice these rudiments on the drumset, between the snare and toms (perhaps over a bass drum/hi-hat ostinato) to increase your proficiency in moving around the kit.

Essential rudiments: the single-stroke roll, the double-stroke roll, the five-stroke roll, the seven-stroke roll, the nine-stroke roll, the eleven-stroke roll, flams, drags, ruffs, paradiddles, and double paradiddles.

My favorite exercise that Mr. Gaber showed me is the following warmup routine that I've used for practice sessions since 1965, and before any gig or recording session that I do.

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My Personal Warmup Routine

Try the above:

1. accenting the beginning of each rhythmic grouping
2. playing the groupings without any accents
3. playing the groupings (8,7,6 etc.) in unison, *with no flams!*

I also alternate single strokes, double strokes, and paradiddles at the same tempo and dynamic level (with no accents). Try to attain as even a pulse as possible.

Start playing all of the above at a moderate tempo, and then gradually increase the speed. Then try playing them at a slow tempo. Play at different dynamic levels: slow to fast; soft to loud; and anywhere in between. This is what control is all about.

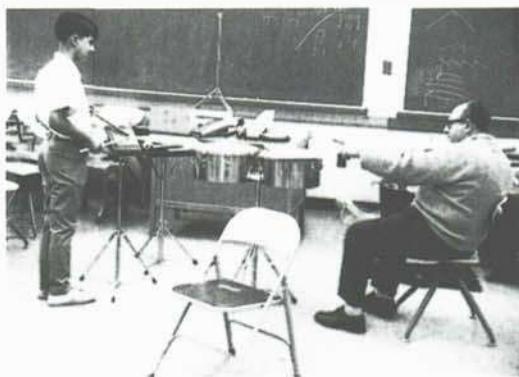
Mr. Gaber taught me many things during our intermittent years of study—some of which have more and more meaning as I become older. Much of his advice concerned music and was to the point. While I did not receive too much specific instruction in jazz drumming *per se*, his pedagogy had more universal musical applications. For example, I had a tendency to hit the instrument too hard, pounding the sound into the instrument, as opposed to bringing, or pulling, the sound out of it. What makes a great percussionist is his touch—the ability to walk up to a concert bass drum, a triangle, a cymbal, or a tom-tom, and get a beautiful sound from it. That is an important part of our art. We explored touch on many different percussion instruments: timpani, xylophone, marimba, snare drum, temple blocks, gongs, and cymbals, as well as some more esoteric instruments like brake drums, caxixi, sleighbells, guiro, and the thunder drum.

The other important lessons that I remember, and that serve me well, include Mr. Gaber's philosophy that there would always be "that kid with the purple drumsticks." In other words, somebody fast and hot and impressive will always come along in the drum scene, and that a drummer had better find his or her own lasting musical values to sustain and nourish an artistic and playing career. That is to say, keep yourself centered, and always answer

that which music begs and demands from all of us: to be musical.

And, in building a career, when the telephone starts to ring more and more, he taught me to never be afraid to say "no" to work, especially if it would interfere with family life. Keep priorities straight. For me, that advice has proven most sage: My family is everything for me. I think that our strength comes from our loved ones, as well as from inside of us. (My other great teacher, Josef Zawinul, told me that I would start to really play the drums once I had my own child. I must admit, I think he's right.)

Finally, George Gaber taught me the value of appreciating the entire universe of knowledge—things percussive and otherwise. May I have his sense of humanity and universality into my golden years! I'll quote from a recent letter that Mr. Gaber wrote me: "Let me remind you that the 'just jazz' drummers have been with us always, and the unusual, curious, experimenters, gifted and pro-



The author with George Gaber, 1966.

fessional drummers have always been with us too. The versatile drummers from the turn of this century played styles and universal concepts with panache while others played narrowly and poorly." In other words, whatever your style, learn from the *world* of music. It is rich with sound and experience!

So I thank you, Mr. Gaber, for sharing your love of music, philosophy, and rimshots with all of us.

by Craig Krampf

Recording With Singers

There are probably as many different methods of recording as there are producers and artists in this world. For me, nothing beats a truly "live" recording session for emotion. The outside world probably doesn't imagine recording being done any other way, but believe me, true *live* sessions don't occur that frequently. For those slightly confused by the word "live," it simply means everyone going for a keeper take at the same time.

A key ingredient here is having a singer who's committed to going for the lead vocal. Most singers have been brought up in the modern school of multi-track recording, which says a vocal sung while the instrumental tracks are going down is only a "scratch," or a guide—nothing more. The singer knows that when the tracks have been completed, he or she can then spend hours, days, weeks, even months getting the vocals right. As a result, the vocal you hear in your phones is sometimes a half-hearted effort.

Most of the vocals heard on records today are composites, meaning master vocal tracks that have been assembled from many different takes and performances. For example, if a producer and vocalist like the way a particular phrase, word, or even syllable was sung on track 16, say, *better* than it was on the other five takes, that phrase or word can be bounced to what we can call our master take, say, track 22. Then they'll listen to the next phrase, and if the best performance of *that* phrase was on track 19, it too can be bounced to track 22. This process continues until a complete vocal take has been assembled. In the event that there is one standout vocal performance, with just a few bad words or phrases, the producer may just punch in on that take and fix the bad spots.

Because of this method of recording vocals, most tracks are cut with a guide vocal to help lay out the parts for the musicians. Quite often, after the musicians know where they are, the vocalist will stop singing and wait in the control room with the producer. In cases like this, the truly professional studio drummer must *imagine* the intensity and dynamics the singer is likely to use, and play accordingly. Very often, the phrasing must also be imagined, so that licks and fills don't get in the way of the lead vocal. In these instances, the musicians will seek out each other for inspiration. I always try to be a source of energy and inspiration for the rest of the band. In turn, I hope they'll do things that will help me "get off." At times, it's as if we're playing for each other.

Now, I'm not condemning this procedure for recording vocals; most records today are done in this fashion, and have resulted in countless brilliant performances. Obviously, the method works. But as I said, something very special can happen when everyone makes the commitment that *this is the take* that could last forever. It's difficult to put into words the emotional feeling you get when you hear a vocalist singing his or her heart out in your headphones. The true meaning and emotional level of the song is accurately portrayed by the vocalist, and this should lead all the musicians down a properly focused path.

I'm being truthful when I say that, on some sessions, I've laughed, cried, gotten angry—experienced the emotion both the artist and song were trying to convey. In turn, I've played that way—with passion! For me, nothing can beat it. I'd keep a word or phrase of a vocal that may be slightly out of tune—but that's *gut-wrenching*—over an in-tune but less intense per-

formance any day of the week. Listen to a few of Springsteen's most passionate performances. There are words that are definitely off-pitch on "Born In The U.S.A.," but it doesn't matter! The emotion and intensity of the overall performance is a killer. That vocal sets the tone, and leads the band to a take that's amazing. *That's* the bottom line, and always will be.

I can't say enough about working with Melissa Etheridge on her first album. There's a liner note on that album that says, "Tracks cut live at Cherokee Studio 1." Those are complete performances. Melissa's vocals and acoustic guitar, Kevin McCormick's bass, and my drums all went down live without any fixing. To hear her in my headphones, 100% committed to singing the lead vocal, made that album very special for me. Kevin and I followed her vocal lead, and we were all committed to capturing emotionally true performances. And the record accurately portrays this.

Kim Carnes is another singer who dislikes overdubbed vocals. She's out there in the vocal booth warming up, as the band smoothes things out and gets ready for a take. When those red lights come on, she's right there with us and raring to go for the take. And as I've said on numerous occasions, you never know which take will be the one, so you had better be playing full out *at all times*. Sometimes with the live approach, the band might get a killer take, but the vocal isn't quite the one, or vice versa. So you do it over again until it happens. It's an incredible feeling when it does.

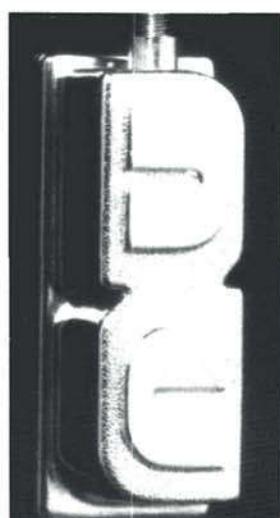
All studio players have had different experiences with singers. If it's a solo artist, you've got to remember that it's their album. You're there to support, flatter, and inspire that vocalist, regardless of whether you're hearing the *real* lead vocal, a *scratch* vocal, or *no* vocal at all. I also always try to look over the lyric sheet to get a feeling from the words. It can't hurt to ask what the song is about and what the writer, vocalist, and producer are trying to convey.

It's important to remember that situations change with every singer you work with. But through it all, you must always strive to be consistent and play with a passion. If you have the vocal, let it lead you down the song's path. If you don't have it as a guide, be sure you're aware of what the song is about, and how the singer might handle it. This way, you'll be leading him or her down the path, and hopefully acting as a source of inspiration. Always envision the totality of it, and strive for that *magic* when the red lights come on.

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Yamaha D8

Sometimes it happens. Yamaha, a company known for its innovative and exclusive technologies, has released an electronic drumkit that isn't on the cutting edge of technology. Perhaps Yamaha was thinking about the working drummer—someone who desires an electronic kit for a more utilitarian purpose...such as playing music. Cutting-edge technology comes with a cutting-edge price tag. Many drummers don't want to (or simply can't) pay the price for the newest state-of-the-art gear. The *D8* doesn't contain every feature that you may desire in an electronic kit. It does contain several features that are clever, well thought out, and well-implemented. For those of you who may be looking for a first-class electronic kit—but might not want to shell out the really big dollars that extra features demand—this kit may be just what you've been looking for.

The Yamaha *D8* electronic drum system consists of one *PSD8* (snare drum), one *PBD8* (bass drum), and three *PTT8* (tom tom) electronic pads, two WS 820 double tom stands, and the *PTX8* Percussion Tone Generator.

The Pads

Since the pads have been reviewed in an earlier issue of *Modern Drummer* (June 1987), let me briefly give you my impression. Overall, they are very playable. The "skin" area is a nice compromise between the hard "tabletop" surfaces of some (notably the early Simmons and Roland pads), and the "mushy" surfaces of others.

The *PBD8* bass drum pad is quite nice. Having a much softer striking area than the other pads, it felt quite a bit like an acoustic bass drum. Compliments to Yamaha for determining that a bass drum pad doesn't need to be 22" in diameter! When folded up for storage or transportation, the *PBD8* takes up very little space. I did have a little problem with it crawling forward when it was played hard. This might be solved by placing the *PBD8* on a different style carpet

(I was using the type that sits inside the front door of a K-Mart) or sharpening the spurs.

I had a bigger problem with the *PSD8* pad. This pad has one trigger under the "head" and another, separate one under the "rim." The playability of this pad was excellent, in that it was extremely easy to catch rimshots and get the sounds from both triggers at the same time. The negative aspect is that when I played only one trigger (either the rim or the head), I still got both sounds! When hitting the head, the sound assigned to the rim was quite soft, but was still there. Adjusting the sensitivity on the *PTX8* helped a little, but never fully solved the problem. Although not Yamaha's intention I'm sure, you could approach this pad as one that can give you a blending of two different sounds.

The Tone Generator

The *PTX8* tone generator is an eight-voice drum synthesizer (taking up two rack spaces). It can be used in live performance in conjunction with electronic pads, as an additional sound source for a drum ma-

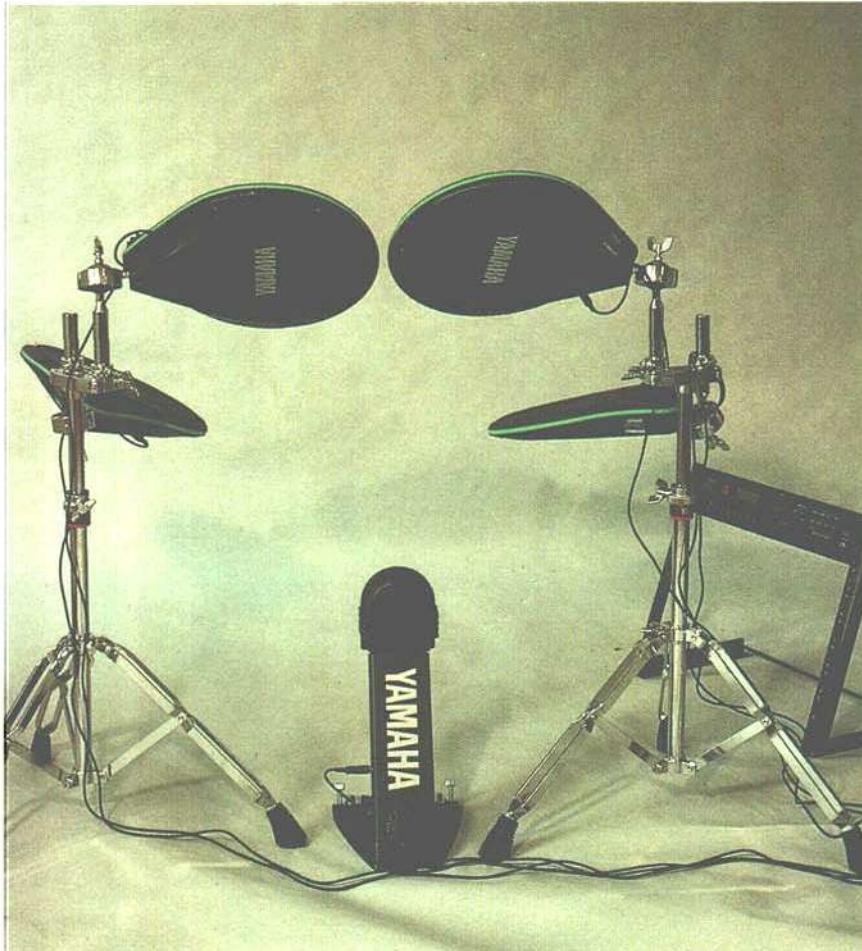
chine, or as a percussion synth in sequenced performances.

The layout of the back panel is clean and easy to understand. There are eight inputs for pads (clearly labeled) and eight individual outputs (one for each pad), as well as mixed stereo left (also used as a mono mix) and right outputs. As would be expected, plugging a cord into one of the individual output jacks removes that pad's sound from the mixed outputs. This is an important feature in a recording studio. By removing the individual signal from the main mix, it is possible to send the bass drum and snare (for example) to two different outboard processors, while using the mixed outputs for the toms.

There are three additional pedal jacks: two for kit increment/decrement and another labeled "footswitch" (more on this later). MIDI-in, MIDI-Out, and MIDI-Thru jacks complete the back panel.

The front panel of the *PTX8* is logically designed and fairly easy to work with. There are two large, red LED's that display which of the 32 drumkits is currently being played. In addition, a two-line by 16-character LED provides the user interface to the internal editing features of the brain.

The control buttons are arranged into four main function groupings. The first consists of eight buttons that are used to select which of the eight pad inputs you are currently working with when editing sounds. The second is a group of four buttons aligned in an up, down, left, right arrangement. The up and down buttons are used to change from one editing parameter to another, and the left-right buttons are used to move the cursor from one position on the LED display to another. There are the standard increment and decrement buttons (also used to select the current drumkit), and a set of eight more buttons that call up a variety of editing functions, such as selecting from internal and cartridge memories, and ad-



Electronic Kit

by Norman Weinberg

justing the sensitivity of the inputs. By grouping the control buttons according to their functions, Yamaha has made programming the *PTX8* a little easier. In addition to these controls, there is a headphone output jack with its own volume control (a very nice feature), and two cartridge slots.

Voice Architecture

The voice layout of the *PTX8* is not too complex, but it might be helpful to clarify a few things. There are 26 percussion "waveforms" (12-bit companded PCM sounds) in the internal memory. You might think of these waveforms as the raw data or building blocks of any sound. To create a "voice," you select a waveform (perhaps you want to start with waveform #14, called "low tom"), and then edit any of its musical parameters (possibly bringing up the pitch or making the sound decay faster). This edited version of a waveform becomes a "voice" when it is saved to one of the voice memory locations. Since the *PTX8* can remember 64 voices in its internal memory, you can access up to 64 different sounds.

When you play the drumkit memories, you're really playing a programmed combination of voices that have been assigned to fire when a certain pad is struck. Perhaps drumkit number one uses voice #44 for the snare pad, voice #22 for the bass drum pad, and voice #3 for one of the toms.

One of the nice things about this type of voice arrangement and assignment is that any sound can reside under any of the eight pad inputs. It's possible to have a drumkit that consists of eight different snare drum sounds—or a kit with eight of the same snare drum sounds. If you like to "turn the beat around," you can assign a bass drum voice under the snare pad and a snare drum voice under the bass pad. Even if this idea doesn't grab you, you can appreciate the flexibility that is available when using this type of voice-to-pad assignment.

The Voices

In order to evaluate the sounds contained in the *PTX8*, I listened to the "raw" waveforms without any editing or enhancement. Of the 26 contained in the internal memory, the 5 1/2" snare, the piccolo snare with rimshot, the high tom, and the electric snare #4 are noteworthy. But you would seldom use the raw waveforms for your voices. More often than not, you're going to want to create your own distinctive drum sounds by applying some of the editing possibilities to them. Customizing the original waveforms is one task where this drum brain really shines!

Here is a list of what you can do to each



waveform when creating a voice: change its volume level (31 positions), change its pitch (a five-octave range), adjust any of the six stages in the voice's envelope, adjust its bend range (how far it bends up or down) and bend rate (how fast it bends), and turn on a loop to create extra-long sounds. The good news: With all these options, it's going to be a long time before you tire of the voices that can be created. The bad news: Not everything you create is going to sound great.

With a five-octave tuning range, it's not surprising that extremely high pitches tended to sound choked and had a "barking" quality. Likewise, extremely low pitches were noisy, grainy, and had a good deal of aliasing to them. Some of these problems can be overcome by creative use of the extensive envelope controls.

My main objection with the voices are the poor loop points used on several of the sounds. The loop mode is necessary if you want to create long percussion sounds, since many of the original waveforms are very short. The manual explains that the best loop points have been preset at the factory (read this as "non-adjustable"), and that "some unevenness is inevitable." Well, for several of the loops, "uneven" is just too kind. A few of them sounded nothing short of terrible, with a prominent "swoosh" or "wah-wah" at the loop point.

When you tire of the sounds that are possible with the *PTX8*, don't despair: You can insert a ROM voice cartridge and access up to 28 additional waveforms. Currently, Yamaha has three voice cartridges available (the same ones used for their *RX5* drum machine).

The Drumkits

While we're talking about controls that are available in drumkits, keep in mind that each pad can be programmed to play any of the 64 voices in the internal memory. Even though there is a slot for a RAM cartridge, it's not possible to access voices off the cartridge without first loading its contents into the internal memory. This means that, even with the cartridge inserted, you still can only reach 64 voices at a time. In addition to this limitation, there is no provision for loading a single voice from

the cartridge into the internal memory. It's either load all or nothing. This makes creating custom RAM cartridges a little more bothersome.

Along with selecting any voice, each pad can also have its own level and pitch setting—which adds a great deal of flexibility to the unit. Instead of using up four voice memory locations to store the same tom sound at four different pitches, you can use your voice memory for storing new timbres, and adjust the pitch of those timbres when you're building the drumkit. In other words, all the pads could be assigned to play the same voice, but at different pitch and volume levels.

There are four "touch" controls for each pad. These four parameters offer an exceptional amount of control during a live performance. The Touch Pitch parameter determines how the playing volume will effect the pitch. Touch Attack controls how the playing volume will effect the attack rate. Touch Decay can be used to control the sound's overall length through volume. And Touch Reverse can be activated to cause the voice to play backwards.

In terms of MIDI implementation, the unit's strong suit is flexible assignment. For each of the 32 drumkits, each pad can have its own MIDI transmit channel, its own note number, and its own gate time—which is not locked to the voice's gate time. This is a dynamite feature that allows the drummer to send a note-off MIDI message that will best suit an external sound generator. You may want a short snare sound from the *PTX8* combined with a longer snare sound from another sound generator. With the *PTX8*, you can do this with ease. In addition to the individual pad MIDI messages, you can program each kit to send a single MIDI program change message whenever that particular kit is called up to memory. For example, you can program the *PTX8* so that calling up drumkit #30 causes your external synth to jump to any program you desire.

"Nice" Things

Let's take a look at some of the other nice features incorporated into the *PTX8*. The unit supports ten chains of up to 32 steps per chain. Chains can be extremely

convenient in a live performance situation, and with 320 possible steps, you should have enough steps for just about any gig.

The kit increment and decrement footswitch controls can be initiated by a pad instead of a switch. Simply plug a pad into either of these jacks, hit the pad, and watch as the new kit is called up into memory. If you're using one of the chains, striking a pad connected to the increment jack will advance you through the steps of the chain.

One of the coolest features of the unit is the footswitch function. When a footswitch is connected to this jack, you can instruct the *PTX8* to change a variety of parameters for as long as the footswitch is depressed. Changes can be made to the pitch, the decay rate, the bend rate, the bend range, and reverse on/off settings. While the *PTX8* will

let you memorize parameters for each of the eight pad inputs, they are global for the entire machine. In other words, the footswitch changes are not memorized into each of the drumkit memories.

Programing voices, kits, and chains is easy once you understand the process. All the features are accessed with the parameter and cursor buttons, and the data increment-decrement buttons scroll when held down for faster entry. When programming voices, the eight pad-select switches on the front panel will also double as triggers. Just hit button number four to hear the sound assigned to that input. This means that it is possible to design voices and drumkits without having to connect the pads.

"It Would Be Nice" Things

The *PTX8* does what it does very well. Every feature it supports worked properly. However, it would be nice if the MIDI implementation were a little more complete. When an electronic set gives you this much control over its internal sounds, it would seem that it should give you more control over external sounds.

It would be nice if the pads could send a variety of MIDI note numbers based on velocity (dynamic note shift), or even send multiple MIDI note numbers (simul-notes) for stacking sounds or playing chords. It would be nice if the machine could send or transmit any of the standard control

change messages. It also can't recognize MIDI mode change messages, and doesn't support local on/off (although you can program any or all of the eight pads to ignore MIDI note-on commands).

Even though the *PTX8* has individual outs, it would be nice if you could program a pad's placement anywhere in the stereo field for the mixed output. The pads are "hard-wired" to certain positions that can't be changed. If you want the snare drum to come out of the left channel on one tune, and the right channel on another tune, your only option (other than using the individual outs) is to reach behind the unit and change the pad's input channel.

I'm not sure why Yamaha limits the machine to reading voices from the internal memory only. It would certainly be a more powerful device (and Yamaha could sell more cartridges) if one could create a set using voices from both the internal and the cartridge memory at the same time.

Finally, it would be nice if the manual were a little more comprehensive. All of the features are covered, but several aren't explained very well. The manual tells you which buttons to push to access the different functions and their lowest and highest possible values. For someone with a good deal of electronic experience, it's not too tough. But if the *PTX8* is your introduction to electronic musical instruments, plan on getting some support from the dealer or a friend. Give yourself several hours to experiment with the envelope settings, touch settings, and bend parameters before everything sinks in.

Bottom Line

This set is going to serve the needs of many drummers. The basic sounds are quite usable (I'm only bothered by some of the loop points), and the extensive degree of editing that is possible makes them even more flexible. With the four touch-control settings, there is a good deal of power and control available for live performance, and the individual outputs are great for the studio. Being able to call up different drumkits or advance the steps in a chain with a pad is a handy feature, and the footswitch changes are nothing short of *tres cool!*

I was hoping that this set would be a marriage between the sounds and voice control of Yamaha's RX5 drum machine and their PMC1 Percussion MIDI Converter. Perhaps this was too much to hope for. After all, those two units combined cost quite a bit more than the *D8* system (and you would still need to buy pads and stands). Instead, it seems that Yamaha decided to take a little bit from each, and present it in a single package that was within the financial reach of most drummers. The suggested retail price of the *D8* is \$1,795.00. For more information, contact Yamaha at P.O. Box 6600, Buena Park, California 90622, or call 1-800-342-7826.

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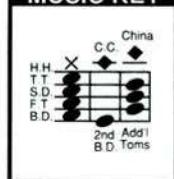
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Photo by Ross Halfin

Lars Ulrich: "Eye Of The Beholder"

MUSIC KEY

This month's *Rock Charts* features the powerful drumming of Lars Ulrich. On "Eye Of The Beholder," from Metallica's *And Justice For All* album (Elektra 6081 2), Lars uses double bass to peak certain sections of the song. Also note how this tune switches feels from duple to triple meters in certain sections. Whenever the hi-hat is struck, it is played slightly open.

J = 128 **Fade In**

Drum notation for "Eye Of The Beholder" by Lars Ulrich. The score consists of six staves of music, each representing a different drum or cymbal part. The notation includes various symbols like 'x', '|', and '^' to indicate specific drum strokes. Measure numbers 1 through 6 are indicated at the end of each staff. The first staff starts with a 'Fade In' instruction.

This page contains ten staves of drum sheet music. The notation uses standard musical symbols like stems and heads, but with specific drumming instructions such as 'x' for a closed hi-hat, '|' for an open hi-hat, and 'z' for a ride cymbal. Rests are indicated by vertical dashes. Measure numbers are placed at the start of certain staves. The music is divided into measures by vertical bar lines.

Measure numbers are present at the start of the following staves:

- Staff 1: None
- Staff 2: 3
- Staff 3: 3
- Staff 4: 2
- Staff 5: 3
- Staff 6: 3
- Staff 7: 3
- Staff 8: 3
- Staff 9: 3
- Staff 10: 2

Time signatures are indicated by the following symbols:

- Staff 1: Common Time (indicated by a 'C')
- Staff 2: Common Time (indicated by a 'C')
- Staff 3: Common Time (indicated by a 'C')
- Staff 4: Common Time (indicated by a 'C')
- Staff 5: Common Time (indicated by a 'C')
- Staff 6: Common Time (indicated by a 'C')
- Staff 7: Common Time (indicated by a 'C')
- Staff 8: Common Time (indicated by a 'C')
- Staff 9: Common Time (indicated by a 'C')
- Staff 10: Common Time (indicated by a 'C')

This page contains ten staves of musical notation for a snare drum, arranged vertically. The notation is in 3/4 time. The first two staves begin with measure number 3. The subsequent staves begin with measure number 13. The notation includes various strokes such as downbeats, upbeats, and sixteenth-note patterns. Measures are often grouped by brackets above the staff. The notation is enclosed in a light blue border.

The musical score consists of ten staves of snare drum notation. Each staff is a single line with vertical stems pointing down. The notation uses several types of symbols:

- Stems:** Vertical lines with small 'x' marks at the top, pointing downwards.
- Upward Arrows:** Small arrows pointing upwards from the stems.
- Downward Arrows:** Small arrows pointing downwards from the stems.
- Slurs:** Curved lines connecting groups of stems.
- Grouping:** Brackets and vertical lines grouping sets of three stems together.
- Timing:** Numerals '3' with horizontal lines above and below them, indicating triplets.

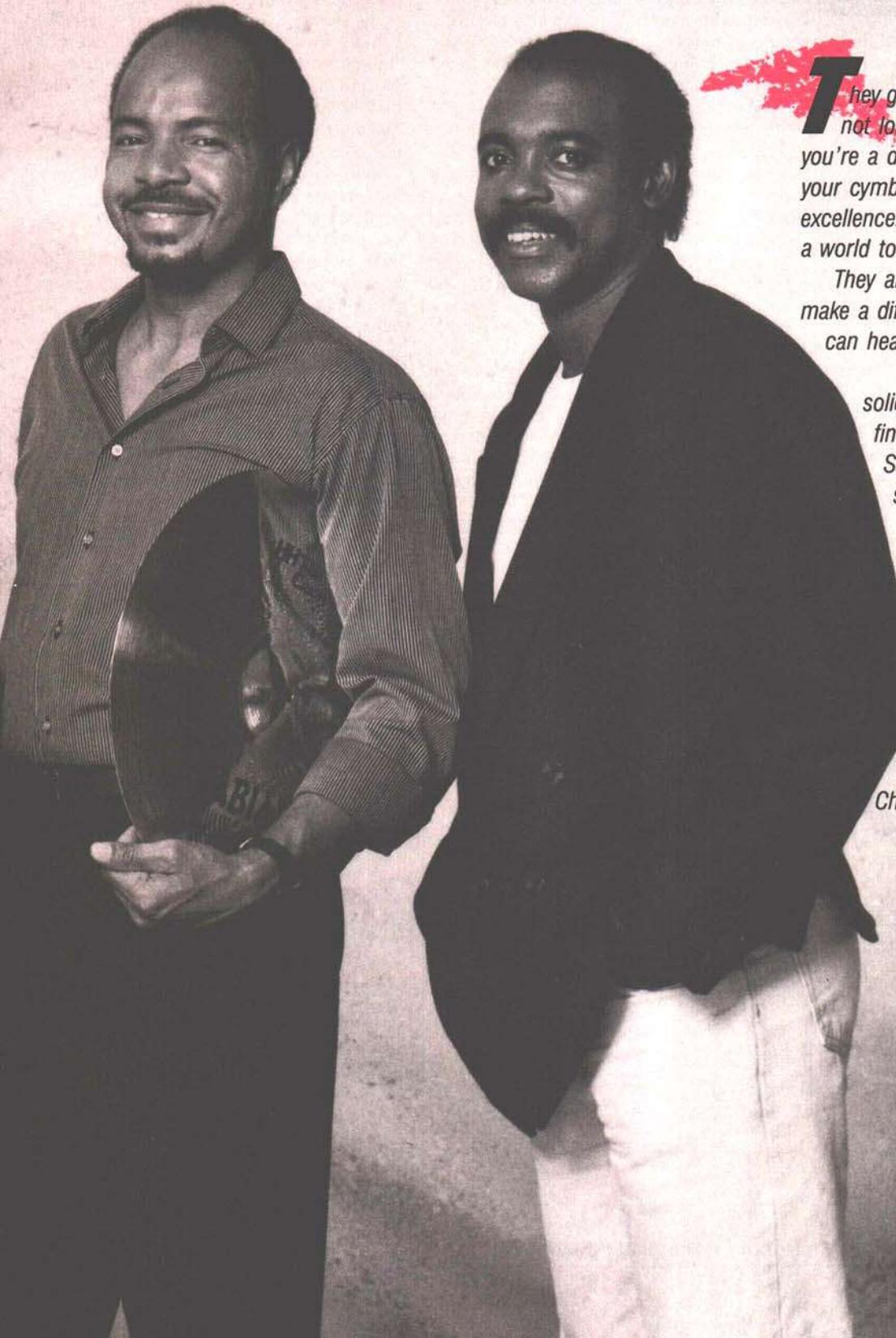
The patterns are intricate, combining these elements in various ways across the ten staves. Some staves begin with stems pointing up, while others start with stems pointing down. The grouping by threes is a prominent feature throughout the piece.



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Photo by Ebet Roberts

"We've got a team here." Jordan is listed as coproducer of the album, as well as co-writer of all the songs. Besides Richards, he is the only musician to appear on every track, and it could be argued that this record is as much Steve's as it is Keith's. In terms of drumming, Jordan combines his sense of historical accuracy with a few new tricks that are sure to be imitated.

The first tune, "Big Enough," features a groove that's somewhere in between reggae and James Brown. Jordan plays a bass-like pattern on his floor tom with a brush, combining it with a strong snare drum backbeat. "We originally cut that with just Keith and me," Steve says, "and the floor tom was basically the bass. When it came time to put the [electric] bass on, it was difficult, but then I thought of 'Bootsy' Collins, and I knew that he would be able to find the right frequency for the bass so that it

wouldn't be covered up by the drums."

Was that floor tom pattern originally played to give it more bottom because it was only drums and guitar? "No," Steve answers, "I didn't play it that way just for that reason. We had been messing around with that kind of groove once before, and I was trying to get a modern 'Sing, Sing, Sing' kind of thing happening. I wanted some kind of funk groove that didn't use hi-hat; I try to use the hi-hat as little as possible these days because I'm just tired of hearing the hi-hat. That tom-tom gave it kind of a tribal, jungle feeling happening along with that crackin' backbeat. Also, a percussionist friend of mine, Jimmy Mae-lan, was dying at the time, and I was thinking about him.

"We played it for about 16 minutes," Steve continues, "and then we edited it down to about three minutes. A lot of the songs started out long and were then cut down, but we never used a click track or anything. There are no machines on this record at all. All the sounds were soiled by human hands," he laughs. "It was like that on the Chuck Berry movie, too. The music editor on the film wanted me to use a click track to keep the beat consistent so that they could cut between takes. But I said, 'We don't need that shit,' and we were still able to cut between takes. When you're dealing with the caliber of musicians we were dealing with, you don't need that. And not only that, but a click track locks you into something that's not real, because

maybe the band won't feel that way at the time. But whatever we start out with, that's what we're going to keep. That's the way the night is going to go. It's not going to be some premeditated tempo from three weeks earlier."

The second track on the album, "Take It So Hard," features Jordan on bass and Charley Drayton on drums. "That was one of the first songs we did," Steve recalls. "I ended up playing bass just because I knew that I could follow Keith on all of those extra-bar things. So it made sense for Charley to play drums. We cut it the first night in the studio in Canada. First, we cut 'How I Wish' in seven takes, and then we cut 'Take It So Hard' in one take. I had never played that whole bass line exactly like that before. I suddenly realized, 'We're making this record and I'm really playing the bass! This is wild! I better get it together.' So we played it, and it was incredible. It blew our minds.

"But Keith, not wanting to let us get too overconfident, said that he wanted to do it again two nights later. We were looking at him like he was crazy. I was really pissed off. 'What do you want to do it again for? What's wrong with you?' And then we played it again and it sounded *horrible*. I mean, it was so *bad*. You would never have thought that it was the same band. And I said, 'Okay, now I get it.' Keith just wanted to bring everybody back down to earth."

Several tracks on the album feature Jordan's distinctive snare drum crack. Watching him play at rehearsal, I'm struck by the fact that Steve isn't lifting his stick very high to get that cutting sound. "It's a direct hit," Steve tells me a few days later. "It's like a martial arts thing where you don't do a big windup—the shortest distance between two points with the most amount of impact. To get that snap, you can't do too much in the air. It's like comparing a batter who overswings or who's way out in front of the pitch with someone like Wade Boggs or Rod Carew, who have that direct stroke and are always getting hits. If the bat is way behind your head and you've got to come all the way around, you don't have as much chance of hitting the ball. I need hits, not home runs."

"This rimshot thing I developed had a lot to do with my love for the way Dave Garibaldi plays and how he got that sound. He said that he would practice on a quarter. If you can hit something the size of a quarter, you have to really nail what you're doing. That takes a lot of hard work, and I started to do some of that kind of stuff. And it really helped me pinpoint the spot I was going for, and I started being able to get that rimshot pop every time."

But for those who think that a heavy backbeat is the only thing Steve Jordan can do, several *Talk Is Cheap* tracks show off some different sides of his playing. "Make No Mistake" has a definite Memphis feel to it, and Steve's search for an authentic Memphis backbeat led to an unexpected treasure. "I was trying to get that backbeat

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sound that they had on all of those old Al Green records," Steve says. "So I recorded with some *Blasticks* on a snare drum, and then I overdubbed another snare drum, and then I overdubbed a tom-tom, because I thought that was how they got that sound. But when we got to Memphis to add the horns to the track, Willie Mitchell hipped me to the fact that they didn't use a tom-tom; they used a conga that was tuned down low. He let me replace the tom-tom with the actual conga that was used on the Al Green records. He tried to find the other conga that they did the gallop with, but he couldn't find it, so we tuned the first conga up and I put the gallop on.

"I got on really well with Willie Mitchell, and at the end of the session he gave me this," Steve says, getting up and going across his loft to a bookshelf. He returns holding a black, 8X12 Rogers tom-tom with a single Evans clear *Hydraulic* head on top, with three strips of masking tape near the top edge of the head. "This drum belonged to Al Jackson," Steve says, with genuine reverence. "He used it on all of those Al Green records. A lot of people have been trying to buy this drumset from Willie, and he wouldn't part with it. But he gave me this. I couldn't believe it. I went to bed with it that night, and I personally carried it through the airport and on the plane when we went back to New York."

"Locked Away" is another track that features a unique backbeat. "I was using Pro-Mark *Rods* on a floor tom, those wood

things with the red tape around them. That's my favorite new toy; I bought all of them that Manny's had. So it was the *Rods* on the floor tom combined with the hi-hat."

On "You Don't Move Me," Jordan plays on something that sounds like a snare drum with the snares turned off. "That was an old WFL snare drum that I made into a timbale," he clarifies. "I took the bottom rim off and everything. It's a wood shell, so it doesn't sound quite as metallic as a timbale, but it doesn't have any kind of covering over the shell, so it really cuts."

"Rockawhile" also features the timbale snare, this time played with *Blasticks*. "I set up differently for every song," Steve says. "I didn't want any drums in front of me that I wasn't going to play. So on 'Rockawhile' and 'You Don't Move Me,' I only had a bass drum, the timbale snare, and a pang cymbal. It was a Chinese cymbal that I bought in Detroit when we did the 'Jumpin' Jack Flash' thing. I don't even know what it is, except that it was made in China. So that's all I had set up. That gets me in a frame of mind; there's nothing around me but these two drums, and I have to make it work. And I get into it, as opposed to sitting behind a conventional setup and trying to remember not to hit certain drums. It's more fun to just sit behind two drums and try to make it work."

One track on the album, "I Could Have Stood You Up," evokes some of the feeling from the Chuck Berry film, as it has that feel that's neither straight 8ths nor shuffle,

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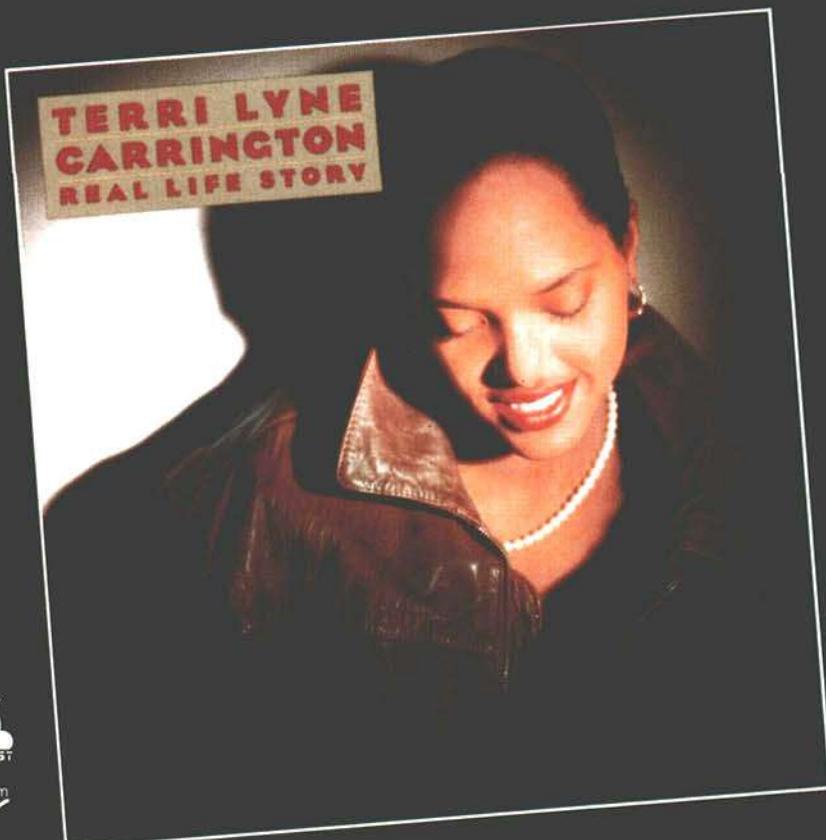
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but something in between. "We wanted to write a Chuck Berry-type song," Steve confirms, "and we did it. We had the same band from the movie, with Johnnie Johnson on piano, Chuck Leavell on organ, Bobby Keys on sax, and Joey Spampinato on bass. Joey can make an electric bass sound like an acoustic bass, and he was key to getting that feel.

"I had a wild kit for that one," Jordan remarks. "I used a big marching bass drum—about 36". I had two tom-toms and one of those old China toms with the tacked-on heads. Carroll Sound let me roam around their basement. I was like Alice in Wonderland looking at all that stuff."

On "How I Wish," "Struggle," and "Whip It Up," Jordan plays an 8th-note groove on the hi-hat, coming off the hi-hat, however, for the 2 and 4 on the snare drum. It's a feel often associated with Charlie Watts, who has used it on numerous Rolling Stones songs. Watts got it from Jim Keltner—who used it as long ago as George Harrison's Bangla Desh concert in 1971—and Keltner got it from Levon Helm. "Charlie asked me about that beat once," Keltner told me on the phone from California, "and I told him that it can really mess up your timing if you try to play it fast. I always use it on medium or slow stuff. But then a few years later, I saw Charlie playing it on a Stones video, and he was really playing it fast. I don't know how he made it work at that tempo.

"That beat is great for guys like me, who don't have strong left hands," Keltner added. "Charlie doesn't have that loud a left hand either, and neither does Levon. But Steve has a great left hand, so he must be using it for a different reason."

"It feels so good," Jordan explains. "It feels amazing to play that way. Now I don't play any other way. I tried to play like that with the *Late Night* band when we did Stones songs, but it didn't work. See, you've got to be playing with people who know what that feel is about. So it doesn't work all the time. But playing with Keith, it's perfect. From playing with Keith, I've learned more and more every day about why Charlie Watts does what he does. Every time I do something the way Charlie did it, I know exactly where he's coming from. He and Keith made a sound together; it was a relationship."

"The funny thing about that beat is that it almost looks like the drummer has a deficiency—that he can't keep the hi-hat going while he plays the snare drum," Steve laughs. "But then I realized that the snare drum sounds better when you play it alone, and that's how Charlie gets that sound. If you hit them at the same time, the hi-hat leaks into the snare drum mic' and cuts out some of the frequencies that you need to get that crack. If you play the snare drum alone, it has room to blossom. You can just keep the snare drum in its place, and it explodes."

Four of the album's tracks—"Take It So Hard," "Struggle," "How I Wish," and "Whip It Up"—start with solo guitar riffs,

and if one listens closely, one can hear something that sounds slightly distorted in the background. Drummers will recognize it immediately as the sound of snares buzzing. "Usually," Steve says, "they want to mute the whole drumkit—put ten faders on the kit, and turn it off until just before the snare comes in. But we didn't do that." It's just one of many little touches on the album that makes it sound like a band set up in a room playing together. "Exactly," Steve agrees. "Making music. Remember that? Music?"

The final song, "It Means A Lot," features a swishy hi-hat. "That was a Bonham influence," Jordan says. "I always try to find the sound for the song. I don't try to force anything into the music. I used my metal crasher on the intro, the same one I used in the 'Jumpin' Jack Flash' video."

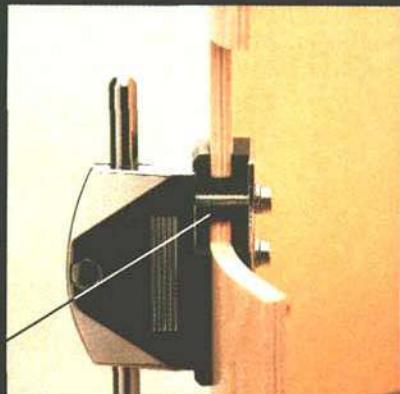
Because of Jordan's tendency to have different setups for different songs, he didn't list a lot of equipment on the album's sleeve. He did, however, credit Joe MacSweeney and Eames drums. "Joe made that high-pitched snare drum that I'm so famous for," Steve says. "It was a gift from Danny Gottlieb, and it's the best drum in the world. I wanted to give Joe credit because he deserves it. He's a craftsman, he's excited about his work, and he puts real care into his work. It's not just a business to him."

For the *Talk Is Cheap* tour, Jordan assembled an interesting assortment of drums. "I used the 7X14 Eames snare drum, of course," Steve says. "I also had my timbale snare, and Charley Drayton used an old *Black Beauty*. The bass drum was a 22" sunburst Yamaha 9000 Recording Series. It was one of the early 9000 series drums, when they were using goya wood. It's one of the best bass drums I've ever heard in my life—so solid and punchy. It sounds better than most 24" or 26" drums. The two Gretsch tom-toms—a 10X12 and a 14X14—belong to Charlie Watts. Gretsch gave him three sets of black drums when the Charlie Watts Orchestra came to New York to play, and he was nice enough to lend them to me." The drums were all fitted with Remo Ambassador heads.

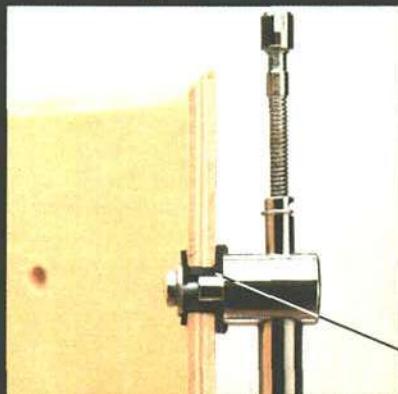
"I used a Paiste 20" medium dark ride, which is a prototype of a new cymbal that's not out yet. It's one of the best cymbals I've ever heard. It can do anything and everything. I also used a 20" Paiste China; I wanted to use the China I bought in Detroit, but I couldn't find it. There was a 20" K Zildjian Jazz Ride that belongs to Charley Drayton, and 15" black Paiste Colorsound hi-hats. I also used my metal crasher."

During the three months between the release of *Talk Is Cheap* and the subsequent tour, Jordan and Drayton worked together on another project that is close to their hearts: their own band, called The Raging Hormones. Although everyone in the band is capable of playing a variety of instruments, and a lot of switching around goes on, the primary lineup seems to be settling in with Steve on guitar, Charley on drums, Sara Lee—formerly with The Gang Of

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Four—on bass, and Eve Moon on guitar. (Eve was the guitarist who accompanied Steve Gadd at Zildjian Day in New York in '84.) Everyone in the group sings.

"I do play drums in this band," Steve says, "but I've been playing more guitar lately. It's funny, but when I don't play drums for a while, and then I sit down at the kit, I play better drums. I still feel more at home on the drums, so after playing other instruments, it's almost a relief to get back on the drums. Sometimes you do your best playing after not playing for a while. You get back to the essentials."

"We have kind of a dilemma in this band, actually, because Charley could be playing drums, bass, and guitar on everything. But on the new songs we've been working on, he's been playing *amazing* drums. Back when I was doing *Late Night*, I knew that I wasn't letting the guys down if I sent Charley in to sub for me, because he's such a great musician. And it was wonderful having him play bass in Keith's band, because Charley and I are like one unit."

Steve, Charley, and Sara have been trying to put this band together for several years. They went through several different people before they found Eve. Just as they found her, though, Keith's album had reached the final production stage, and Steve was busy with Keith almost 24 hours a day. But then, as mentioned, they had three months to work after Keith's album came out. During that time, they made some demos to submit to record companies. "We hate to call

them 'demos,'" Sara told me, "because they are master quality. They can actually be used for the album."

But this is not going to be one of those groups that only exists in the studio. "We want to be able to play the music live," Steve stresses. "Something that bothers all of us a lot is when you see like three people on the album cover and then you go to the gig and there are twelve people on stage. Or they're playing with tapes. Or there are drum machines. Or there is a guy behind the curtain playing some of the parts on a synthesizer. I know that kind of stuff happens every day, and it's not supposed to be a big deal, but I can't take that at all. This band is going to be able to play the music live."

The Hormones is also giving Steve an outlet for his songwriting, which he has been developing for quite a while. "Whenever I go to California," he says, "I work with my very close friend Danny Kortchmar, who is a great songwriter, great guitar player, great producer. Danny and I wrote a song that's going to be on Don Henley's next album, called 'Shangri-la.' And then Danny, Henley, and I wrote another song together. Danny and I have been working together for several years. He's an ex-New Yorker, and he has that edge. He doesn't want to be complacent; he's always searching for new things. That's why he's at the forefront of making music. I like to be around people who stimulate me, so working with him is really cool."

"Danny brought me in to do some stuff on Henley's record," Steve continues. "We got some resistance from Don in the beginning, because Don's a drummer, too. But then Don realized that I was a full musician—that I wrote and stuff—and we became closer. And I think that Don Henley is one of the best writers in rock 'n' roll, so I feel that it's an achievement to earn his respect and contribute a song I co-wrote to his album."

Another project that Jordan is proud of his participation in is the Neil Young album *Landing On Water*. "Neil is one of my heroes," Steve smiles, "and working with him was unbelievable. It was another chance to learn about songwriting. After the sessions, he and Kootch [Kortchmar] and I would hang out together, and we'd work on songs or just sit around playing acoustic guitars. Making that record with him was one of those experiences where you can put everything you've got into it, because you're being asked to. I normally put a million percent into everything I do, but sometimes people don't want that, and it leads to controversy. But when people want that, it can only lead to a joyful experience, and that's what Neil's record was. Everything he does is rockin'. The guy's in love with life. In that way, he's very similar to Keith."

Other projects that Steve has been involved in over the past couple of years include some tracks for Bob Dylan's *Down In The Groove* album. "It's a little harder to give everything you have to Bob," Steve

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comments, "but it was fun. We recorded ten tunes in one day. He only used a couple of the tracks, though, so I don't know what's going to happen to the rest of those songs.

"I've done some other records over the past couple of years," Steve continues. "I recorded with Aztec Camera, and I played a little guitar on a new Dave Sanborn record. Sam Phillips has a new record out that I did some tracks on. I did Feargal Sharkey's record, *Wish*, and Charley, Sara, Feargal, and I wrote a song for it called 'Safe To Touch.' We might recut it with the Hormones."

Currently, the Raging Hormones is where Jordan is putting his energy. "We're going to do some more recording," he says, "and hopefully we'll get signed to the label of our choice. We'll definitely have a record out in '89. It's a real good feeling to finally be doing our own band. I don't know how to articulate it, really. It's got its ups and downs and its headaches, but at least it's our own headache," he laughs. "At least we know it's ours. It's almost like starting over, and there's something very exciting about that."

Indeed, these days Steve Jordan is obviously excited about the things he has been doing. And yet, at the same time, he also seems to be more at peace with himself than he was four years ago when I interviewed him. "Yeah," he admits, "I was going through some inner turmoil then, because I was still trying to scratch out what I was really about. I was going through a turning point in terms of my identity, trying to figure out what I really wanted to do. But it's been working out great."

There's one aspect of Steve's personality that hasn't changed, however, and it's one of his most endearing qualities. Despite the fact that he has worked and recorded with some of the biggest names in the business, including genuine legends such as Keith Richards, Bob Dylan, Chuck Berry, Aretha Franklin, and Neil Young, Steve has retained a childlike innocence and enthusiasm for his original heroes, and for music in general. "Yeah," he smiles, "you never get used to the stuff you love, and you should fight to retain those feelings. I remember the night I finally met Ringo—July 3, 1986. I was so excited. He answered the door, and it was *him!* I couldn't believe it. *Ringo!* That really blew me away.

"If you can't stay excited about the people who inspired you, maybe you picked the wrong people to look up to, or maybe they weren't inspirational people to begin with. It's all in your heart. Look at Keith; he's 45 years old, but his spirit is still 19 years old. I still feel like I'm 19, and I want to stay that way. There are guys younger than me who are already tired of what they're doing, but everybody I like is still out there doing it as though they just started. That's the thing about music: You can play it until the day you drop, and you can listen to it until the day you drop. You *need* it. I'm addicted to it, and I can't live without it."



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Kenwood

down a solid 4/4 groove, with his right foot triggering a booming bass drum, his left foot triggering a clean, cracking snare sound, and his left hand running the fatback bassline on "The Message," a rap tune that hit big for Grandmaster Flash in 1981. Through his headset he's reciting the vicious rap: "Don't push me 'cause I'm close to the edge/I'm trying hard not to lose my head/It's like a jungle out there sometimes I wonder how I keep from going under."

The house rocks to this forboding anthem of urban angst. Then, suddenly, Kenwood reaches over with a free right hand, grabs a stick, and starts soloing on the kit, beginning with a one-handed drum roll and taking it all the way out with some complex off-time fills on the toms. Simply mind-boggling!

Kenwood's feats of independent limbs and independent rhythms—a concept he calls bilateral drumming—go way beyond the realm of traditional timekeeping. His Meta Rhythmic Orchestra is the product of staunch discipline, unbridled conviction, and boundless enthusiasm combined with a clear artistic vision and an organic approach to the music. What Kenwood has come up with, through years of dedication and single-minded pursuit of his goals, is basically an extended technique on a conventional instrument. At first glance, there's a temptation to dismiss the results of his ambitious experiments as mere novelty and gimmick. Yet Kenwood imbues his "gimmick" with soul. The results, no matter how mind-boggling the technique, are ultimately musical. It's Kenwood's triumph of human spirit over technology. His stuff communicates as it holds one in awe; it entertains as it astounds. And it has to be seen and heard to be believed.

So far, Kenwood has only unveiled his M.R.O. around Manhattan at nightclubs like Mikell's, Manila, Visiones, Kenny's Castaways, the Blue Note, the Lone Star, and the Jazz Center. And he has done his thing at various clinics around the country, in-

cluding the 1987 Zildjian Day in Dallas (which was videotaped for posterity). Perhaps as word gets out (and resources permit), he'll eventually be able to get his one-man act together and take it on the road.

Meanwhile, Kenwood has been touring Europe in a power trio setting with Mahavishnu bassist Jonas Hellborg and Turkish keyboard whiz Aydin Esen. Recording plans are in the works. Woody is also a member of the NSA Young Lions, a jazz aggregation made up of fellow practicing members of Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism. This past summer they toured around the country as part of "This Is America," a big musical production sponsored by Nichiren Shoshu Soka Gakkai of America (NSA), the lay organization of Nichiren Shoshu Buddhist believers in the United States. The group's membership includes Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Tina Turner, and Ronald Shannon Jackson.

Kenwood Dennard first made his presence felt on the international music scene back in 1976 as a member of Pat Martino's powerhouse fusion quartet. (Check out the highly energized Joyous Lake on Warner Bros.) A year later he added another notch on his belt by replacing Phil Collins in the British fusion group Brand X. (His work is documented on their live album, Livestock, on Passport Records.)

In the latter part of the '70s he racked up jazz credits with the likes of Dizzy Gillespie, Charles Mingus, and Pharoah Sanders, as well as playing the smooth pop-jazz of Grover Washington, Jr. and the swinging fare of vocalese master Jon Hendricks.

He toured extensively with the Manhattan Transfer at the outset of the '80s before meeting and hooking up with Jaco Pastorius, whom he continued to perform with in a variety of contexts up until the bassist's tragic death in September of 1987. (Check out Jaco's instructional video, Modern Bass, produced by Drummers Collective, for a glimpse of Kenwood's musical rapport with Pastorius.)

A successful teacher, clinician, composer, sideman, and one-man bandleader, Kenwood Dennard is a role model for aspiring drummers from all disciplines and backgrounds. As he puts it, "My thing is to do my best in hopes that you might be inspired to do your best at whatever you do in your field."

BM: Tell us a bit about your background. How did you get involved with music?

KD: My being a musician started from curiosity about the piano as a child. We had a Steinway baby grand in the house. I used to get on that piano at the age of three. I remember distinctly playing one lick over

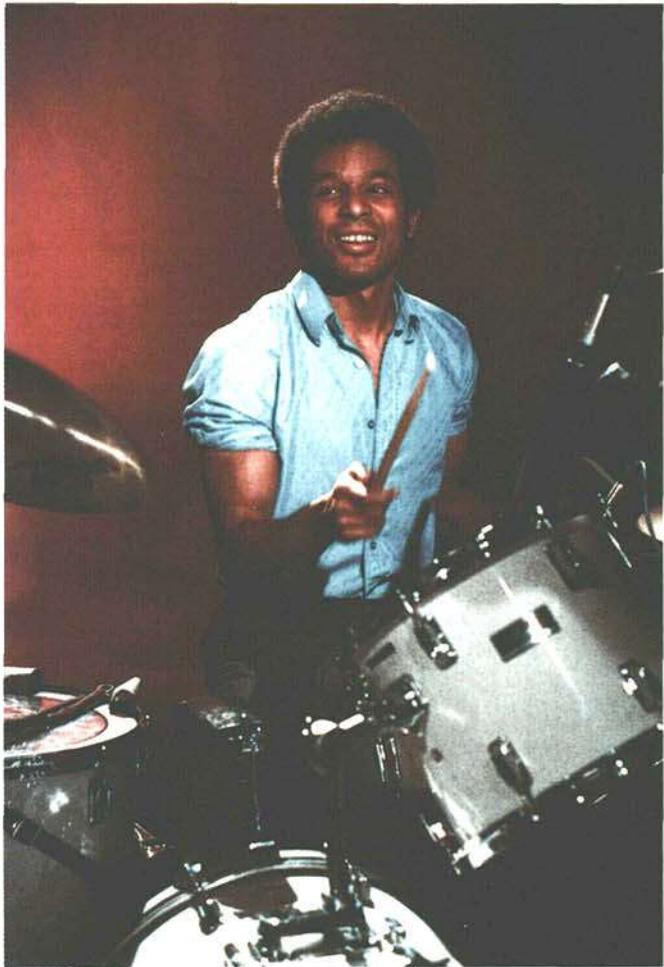


Photo by Ebet Roberts

I'm sitting in a Greenwich Village nightclub waiting for Kenwood Dennard to unveil his Meta Rhythmic Orchestra (M.R.O.). There's a ton of gear on stage, all of it belonging to Kenwood. There are no sidemen in sight. This is Kenwood's incredible one-man show, wherein he lays down synth bass lines with his left hand, comps chords on a keyboard with his right, triggers bass drum, snare, hi-hat, and various percussive effects with both feet, reaches up with a stick and traverses his kit like a one-armed Elvin Jones, and sings melody lines through a headset microphone—all simultaneously!

Kenwood opens with Charlie Parker's "Donna Lee," navigating the chops-busting bop line with his left hand on the synth bass while doubling it with his voice, all the while keeping a steady swing feel happening with his right hand and two feet. Next he speeds through Jaco Pastorius' tricky "Teen Town," a tune he played more than once with the late, great bassist. Only this time, Kenwood is covering the bass lines, chords, and melody while keeping up that chugging disco-shuffle pulse with his feet and hands.

He jumps on Bird's "Confirmation" with a vengeance, adding original lyrics to that bop anthem while sailing through at a breakneck pace, feet and hands flying in all directions. Then he gets funky, laying

Dennard

by Bill Milkowski

and over, at least four hours a day. You don't have much to do at that age—no pressing appointments and that kind of thing.

My parents are both opera singers. They met at the Juilliard School of Music. My mother is also a classical pianist and does a lot of teaching now. She has a school in Manhattan called Manna House Workshops, which is where I was able to develop a lot of my ideas about bilateral drumming. My sister was playing piano and French horn when we were growing up, so all four members of my immediate family were musicians.

BM: What kind of music did you hear around the house as a kid?

KD: Mostly classical and opera—certainly no jazz. My sister, who is eight years older than me, enjoyed folk music, the Beatles, the Beach Boys, and the Four Seasons. She was pretty influential in my early music listening experiences. Later on I got attracted to James Brown. He had a new hit every

Kenwood's setup is a complex one, incorporating acoustic drums and electronics. His basic kit is a Pearl drumset with a *Free Floating System* snare. Remo heads are on everything: *Pinstripes* on the toms, a *CS Black Dot* on the bass drum, and an *Ambassador* or *Diplomat* on the snare. He uses a variety of Zildjian cymbals, including a K dark crash, a 20" heavy *Brilliant Rock* ride, and *New Beat* hi-hats. He has four DW electronic trigger foot pedals that run to a Dynacord digital drum brain. The first pedal has a crash cymbal sound, the second one is a bass drum, the third is a snare, and the fourth is another bass drum to get a double bass drum effect. The other four channels in the Dynacord are taken up by triggers coming from the acoustic drums: a *Black Knight* pickup made by Marc on the snare, a Barcus Berry pickup on the hi-hat, a *Black Knight* on the bass drum, and two Barcus Berry pickups on the cowbell that go into one channel through a Y-chord. The acoustic drums and cymbals are also miked with Crown *GLM-100* microphones, which are fed into a Hill 16-channel mixer.

Kenwood's Yamaha *DX7* (for bass lines) and Korg *DW-8000* (for harmony lines and rhythm guitar single-note lines) are fed into a Simmons programmable mixer, along with a custom-made MIDI shaker and a Roland *MC-500* sequencer. As he explains, "I have various programs that are basically settings. For instance, #1 might have a real loud bass drum sound, a medium right-hand sound, and a very quiet shaker sound; #2 might have quiet settings for a ballad, and so on."

Kenwood uses a Yamaha *SPX-90* effects processor for phase and echo

Kenwood's Equipment

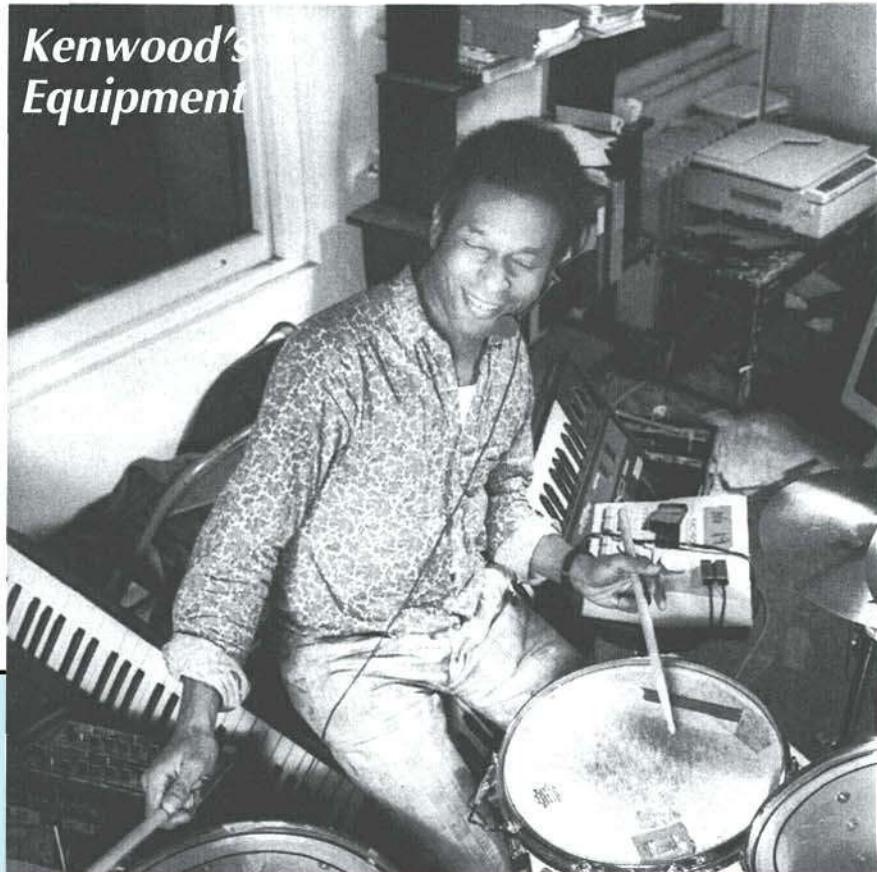


Photo by Aldo Mauro

on all the instruments, and a Rane equalizer to help eliminate feedback. A set of Roland *Octapads* provides Latin percussion sounds, and a Korg *VPB-1* vocoder hooked up to the headset mic allows him to sing like a munchkin from *The Wizard Of Oz* or Lurch from *The Addams Family*. His MIDI shaker is hooked up to a Simmons *MTM* trigger box, which can shape the threshold of sound, and finally into a Pearl *Syncussion SY-1*. "Everytime I shake this thing, it sends out an electronic pulse. So basically I can get whatever sounds I want just by strapping it to my leg and shaking my leg. That way I can get, say, a hi-hat sound if I'm already playing with both feet and both hands on other instruments. If I turn up the threshold, I can get all kinds of weird, whistling sound effects."

He also uses an Akai *S-900* sampler, a Dynacord sampler, and a Sound Code Systems 350-watt power amplifier.

As you can see, Woody is wired and ready to dazzle with his Meta Rhythmic Orchestra. For acoustic gigs, he plays a five-piece Pearl set with 12" and 13" rack toms, a 16" floor tom, a 22" bass drum, a 20" Zildjian ride cymbal, and a 16" Zildjian crash cymbal. He uses Vic Firth *American Classic Jazz* and *Rock* sticks.

week back then, and I was the first one in line at the record store. I also started listening to a lot of Aretha Franklin, Sam & Dave...this was around the age of eight or nine, when I started playing drums. Up until then, it was all just classical piano—Beethoven, Bartok, Khachaturian....

BM: What turned you on to drums?

KD: I was walking down the street and I saw some ten-year-old drummer playing in a band. They all had these glittery blue

sequined costumes, with long coats like James Brown used to wear. And the drummer was funky! I saw him and thought to myself, "I can do that!" It was a real inspiration. I just knew if I ever got my hands on that instrument, I would just be great. So I started playing on everybody else's drumsets for a while, until I finally got a set of my own for Christmas at the age of nine.

BM: Your parents didn't mind?

KD: Well, they bought me an old Kent

drumset and let me practice in the house, so I guess not. Once I got my own drumset, you couldn't tear me away. I'd never go out of the house. I'd just sit and figure out things on my own. I had this cheap little record player that I couldn't really play along with because it wasn't loud enough. So I'd have to rely on memory: "What was that thing I heard on that Temptations record?" From there I would figure out things on my own: "Well, if I can do that, then I

can do this," and so on.

BM: Did you have any mentor coming up?
KD: Not in the flesh—just records. But I used to go to the Apollo Theater a lot for inspiration. I couldn't get enough of that. There was this one band—Willie & The Mighty Magnificents—man, they should go down in history. The drummer had these double bass drums that just wouldn't quit. And he was maybe 16 or 17 years old. Later on, when I started to really get into myself, I had competitors who served a similar function as mentors: They made me improve my drumming. Later I got into Elvin Jones and Zigaboo Modeliste of The Meters. Those were some really heavy influences in my life at that point. I used to memorize Zig's drum solos. And Elvin just blew me away.

BM: Did you ever get to meet either of them?

KD: Only much later. I was in New Orleans, playing with Jaco at Tipitina's. Jaco had Zig sit in, so I got to meet him, and we hung out. I met Elvin at Frank Ippolito's Drum Shop, which used to be on 50th Street and 8th Avenue. That was the place for cats to go to buy their equipment and get it repaired. Anyway, I was there playing a one-handed roll on a practice pad, and Elvin said to a bunch of people, "Hey, come over here, check this guy out. He's got a new technique." He watched me for a while, then grabbed me and hugged me. He actually picked me up off the ground, you know? And we became friends. When he came to Boston later on—while I was attending the Berklee College of Music—he let me get up and play at one of his seminars. I had written a piece based on the numbers of his birthday—9/9/27—and just presented it to him as a labor of love. I just dredged up the courage to say, "Look, I wanna play this piece." So I jumped on his yellow set and just wailed. And that's how I got into playing on yellow drums. I wouldn't touch any color but yellow for a while. Some people assumed it was because of Tony Williams, whose drumming I also greatly admire. But actually it comes from Elvin.

BM: What were some of your earliest performing experiences?

KD: I was in a real professional rehearsal band called Listen My Brother when I was 12 or 13 years old. It was full of young kids, but it was no kid band. We'd have workshops where producer Peter Long would present us with projects and challenges. So it was really a great learning experience. We rehearsed all the time, and at night we'd warm up for people like Wilson Pickett or Aretha Franklin at The Apollo. Carlos Alomar [guitarist and musical director for David Bowie] was in that band, and Luther Vandross was the lead vocalist. It was a serious group, and after playing with them for about a year, I had a pretty clear perspective on what it was like to be involved in the professional music scene and what kind of a lifestyle musical celebrities had.

BM: How did you go from digging James Brown and all the R&B hits of the day to digging Elvin Jones?

KD: I got into a jazz scene up in Harlem through my friend Paris Wright and his father, Herman, who had played with Ahmad Jamal and Count Basie. I was taking drum lessons from a guy named Willie Kessler and was pretty much into a Buddy Rich style. But Al Corra, a 62-year-old bass player, sat me down and said, "Man, you gotta get hip! You're too old-fashioned." So I started getting more into bebop—listening to Max Roach and learning how to swing with the cymbal and *not* play four with the bass drum. And, of course, listening to Elvin opened me up a lot.

BM: What experience did you have after Listen My Brother?

KD: I played in this Top-40 band called The Soul Intentions, which was cool 'cause it offered a lot in terms of individual expression. We won a lot of talent shows around New York. But then my father forbade me to play any gigs. I was 16 or 17 at the time. He wanted me to concentrate on my academics. I was in a French immersion program at Dalton High School, so I had to do things like study chemistry in French. So for a while I didn't play gigs, but I continued practicing drums and vibes along with all the academics. I continued my classical studies on piano as well. I studied theory and ear training at the Manhattan School of Music prep department and graduated at age 17. This no-gig policy continued even after I enrolled at Berklee, but towards the end of my first year there we talked it over, and my Dad got a little more lax. During my time at Berklee, I played gigs with great R&B singers like Brook Benton and Maxine Brown at this dance club in Boston called The Sugar Shack. I also hooked up with Delmar Brown [keyboardist with Sting and with the Gil Evans Orchestra] in his band, Oncoming Horizons, which we formed after graduating from Berklee. And then we both hooked up with Pat Martino.

BM: What was that like?

KD: It was challenging technically, artistically, and philosophically. I saw France, and I saw a lot of the United States in a very local, personal way—driving around in this Lincoln *Continental*. I got a chance to meet many people in the business and I developed some new concepts while I was with Pat. This was the early development of the concept called bilateral drumming.

BM: Can you expand on that?

KD: It started around '73 or '74. I used to go into the practice rooms at Berklee and play—sometimes eight or ten hours at a crack. Sometimes I'd play even longer on weekends, and I actually pushed 14 hours a couple of times. I'd go in there with my drums, and my electric piano plugged into an amp. I had no intention of really playing them together, but that's what ended up happening. From fooling around that way I realized, "Wow, I can handle the bass line and the drums at the same time. What a

great idea!" A few years later, after playing with Pat and with Brand X, Pharoah Sanders, and Dizzy, I began concentrating more on the bilateral drumming concept. I'd practice at Manna House, working on developing the M.R.O. I did a concert there in '79 where I played three keyboards and drums at the same time. I had one keyboard for the bass line to be played with my left thumb, then I'd handle chords on an ARP string synth with the other three or four fingers on that hand. The other hand would be free for drumming. That's how I developed something I call The Woodstroke—by playing one-handed a lot. I had this student named Magros who had this incredible one-handed roll. He was utilizing the rim of the snare drum to cause the stick to bounce to get a double-stroke roll with one hand. I took that idea, refined it, and made it louder, producing a single-stroke roll with one hand.

BM: Were there other people who spurred you on to develop the M.R.O.?

KD: Yes. I was working in Holland in a band led by Chris Hinze. The bass player in the group was Rael Wesley Grant, who I also played with in a real powerhouse metal-fusion group called High Life and later in a band with Delmar Brown called Bushrock. Anyway, Rael and I would get together and talk about, "What would be the most awesome way to play bass or drums?" You know, we'd always be pushing each other, stretching our limits with, "Can you do this? Can you do that?" I told him that I had come up with a technique by which I could play eight ostinati at once: cowbell, floor tom, bass drum, hi-hat with the left hand, snare drum (also with the left hand), crash cymbal, left foot snare drum on a special foot-activated snare I had on the floor, and finally a whistle, which I used to use a lot with Pat Martino and Brand X. That led to playing eight different rates of speed on the drumset, which I later learned while touring around with Manhattan Transfer. So, you can see, I always wanted to play more different rhythms and bring them together in one drumset. And that led to incorporating keyboards and playing different keyboard parts. I wanted to be able to play a solo concert and sound like an entire band, playing all the different parts and different feels while carrying on in the jazz tradition—namely improvisation. So I carry on that tradition in concept without necessarily playing in what you might think of as a jazz style.

BM: Has your M.R.O. presentation changed over the years?

KD: Yes. I used to have two full drumsets on stage—a really massive setup with 39 pieces in all. Now, with the advent of MIDI gear, it's been condensed considerably. I still have two functional drumsets, but you don't see them now because it's so electronic. Now I can get as much sound with just 20 pieces on stage, which makes it a lot easier to transport.

BM: What does the term "Meta Rhythmic Orchestra" mean?

KD: The term "meta" means "beyond" or "transcending." So a meta rhythm is a rhythm that transcends itself. In terms of drumming, a 16th note is a 16th note. But depending on how it's moving, it can create something that goes beyond just what the note is. Meta rhythms are also strange phenomena or occurrences, like when you're thinking about somebody and at that instant they call you on the phone. It's a rhythm that transcends itself. Nowadays, I can explain it even more than I could before because I have a Buddhist background. By chanting nam-myohorenge-kyo, you basically get in rhythm with the universe, and that really relates to what I'm doing with M.R.O.

BM: Were there any books you studied that helped you develop your ideas about bilateral drumming?

KD: I got into *Four-Way Coordination* by Marvin Dahlgren and Elliot Fine. There's a literal tempo in that book that I adhere to. It's not easy. I also got into the Chapin book. Books are important, but getting the actual feeling is extremely important. The most important thing is going out and taking action and moving people. That's the whole thing that I felt when I first heard that ten-year-old drummer on the street when I was a little kid.

BM: Do you work with books today?

KD: Yeah, I've got shelves full of books. And I enjoy letting my students come in with their past influences and problems that they've had, and then presenting them with what I think is the ideal book for them. But basically, I just try to get them to have an understanding of their own potential. That way, they can go home and be their own teacher and have better lessons when they come back to me.

BM: What are some of the common problems that students present to you?

KD: Generally, they want to emulate some of the things they've heard on the radio or on MTV. Basically, they like to have something laid out for them that they can copy. But they come in for a lot of reasons. A lot of people mention technique: "I can't play fast enough." So I teach them about sustaining notes to create the impression that all the notes are connected. Some of my students want to get into the independent limb thing; others just want to work on tone. It depends.

BM: What different things have you learned from the musicians you played with?

KD: Hubert Laws taught me how not to get in the way in terms of overtones—which many drummers don't think about. Wayne Shorter taught me how to play less, which helps you focus on musical clarity. I should also thank Wayne for introducing me to Buddhism, as well. Grover Washington, Jr. showed me that it's possible to play with complexity and still communicate with a musical statement that is clear. That's a good knack to have. George Benson is another guy who has mastered that. David Amram was inspiring because he's a classical musician turned jazz musician, kind of

like me. Bobby McFerrin is a role model for my singing. I studied with him for a while. Gil Evans...man, it was so fulfilling to play with that band—unbelievable. Just as much importance and energy went into the ensemble playing as the solos in that band. Gil's band was a classic example of a musical situation where everybody put their energy, soul, and sincere effort into listening to everybody else and being creative and improvising—while still holding together their own part with some semblance of musical clarity. There were some train wrecks sometimes, but when it worked it was magical. And Jaco? It was great. I had a lot of fun with him. He was the closest person in my life, for years. After he passed, it was the only time in recent memory that I just felt solid misery. It was a combination of frustration over existing in a society that would allow something like that to happen to such a great artist and sadness over losing such a close friend.

Jaco taught me about thinking ahead. He was a step ahead of you all the time. Half the time you never knew what he was gonna play next. I don't think he even knew. And still I had to lock in with this guy somehow. So I had to be ahead, too. Or as he used to put it, "Be awake! Pay attention!" I miss him.

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Photo by Paul Jonason

and who trust me, say, "I want this type of a feel...." I can work with somebody. If you want a little less, I'll give you less. If you want a little more, I can give you more.

I also like to work "with people money-wise and time-wise. I don't want to spend more time than I have to on something. I'll tell someone, "I don't think this needs anything. Leave it alone." I'd rather tell someone that than just play something for the hell of it. And the same thing financially, too. I tell people, "If you have a tight budget and you want to use me, call me up and talk to me about it." A lot of musicians make the mistake of saying, "I'm triple scale, I don't do demos, I don't play for free." I do. I do small gigs; I do big ones. I'm very afraid of not being accessible and being known for having a bad attitude.

RF: What is a good rule of thumb on a situation where you've never worked with the producers? Do you give them more so that they can tone you down? Do you give them less because you don't want them to think you're a pig?

LC: I never give less. That, to me, is the wrong thing to do. A lot of times when I'm in the studio, I'll listen to a tune, and in the middle of the tune, I'll go out into the studio and start playing, trying different things. Sometimes I'll even take a whole pass at a tune. I'll say, "Run it from top to bottom; I'm just going to try a bunch of different things." The smart producers will record it, and afterwards they'll say, "I liked this and I liked that...." I like to give people options. "Here are the options right here."

then one statement has to lead into another. If you're going to do this thing here, and then you stop and do something else, that's out of context. That in itself can be a different way of approaching a solo, too, though. It's not my favorite way, but it's another, more abstract way.

RF: In the studio, how do you know what to play?

LC: Just trial and error.

RF: It seems to me that in the studio, unless we're talking about film, most of the percussion parts aren't written out.

LC: Most of them aren't. It's just something that you feel. It's instinct.

RF: Do most of the producers give you freedom to create?

LC: Most of them do. The ones who have worked with me, who know how I play

You're the producer, take what you need." Sometimes I'll even go as far as laying down a whole bongo track from top to bottom, and I'll tell them, "If it doesn't work all over the place, it's up to you to take some of it out." That's what the mute button is for, that's what erase is for, and that's what producers and engineers are for—to make those decisions. Sometimes I'll walk into a situation, and the cats will go, "Hey, I've got this tune, but I don't know what the hell to do with it; help me."

RF: Do you like a little more direction?

LC: I like some direction, even a hint, even to tell me what *not* to do. Sometimes too much input is a drag, too. That can be real crazy. I was in one situation on Richard Simmons' album where there were literally four producers in the studio. At one point, I just said, "Listen, there are too many people telling me what to do. I want one producer, one engineer, and a second engineer, if you need it. Get rid of the lyricist, get rid of the songwriters, get rid of your friends."

RF: What did they want from you?

LC: God knows. It was an exercise album, for God's sake. I've come up against some really ridiculous things. I did a Minnie Riperton album two years after she died—real scary. I did that album for about a week and I came home crying just about every night. They took these old tracks that she recorded before she passed away, laid down a cowbell tempo, and then erased all the other tracks except for her vocal. It was just her voice and the cowbell, and it was pretty spooky. I wasn't well after that; it really broke me up. I really loved her.

RF: Did you ever work with her when she was alive?

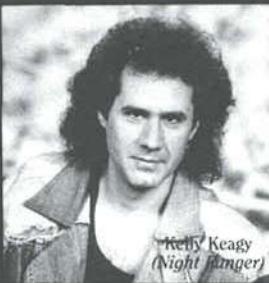
LC: No, I never did. That really broke my heart. I think if she were around for that project, though, she would have dug it.

There have been all kinds of situations I've been in. I just did an overdub for John Klemmer on an album that he's been working on for a few years. I show up for the session, and I see the engineer and the second engineer, and I say, "Guys, where's John? Isn't Klemmer going to be here?" Unbeknownst to me, there's this little speaker on the mixing console that's connected to the phone, and I hear a muffled, "Lenny, Lenny, here I am," and it's John Klemmer talking to me through the phone. He was sick that day. That definitely goes down in my history as one of the strangest things.

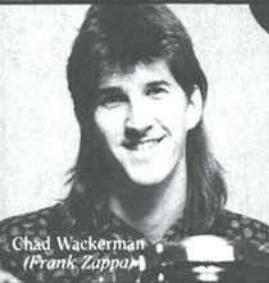
RF: How do you know what instruments to bring to a session?

LC: I don't. Sometimes they'll tell you. A general setup would be two congas, a set of bongos, timbales, bells, some cymbals, and a table with hand percussion consisting of woodblocks, various cowbells, triangles, finger cymbals, chime trees, bell trees, shakers, caxixis, and sometimes a shakere. Unless somebody asks for something specific, that would usually cover it all. Sometimes people will tell me, "I want something that sounds like this and that." I have access to Emil Richards' percussion

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array, so I'll rent stuff from him to get that sound.

RF: What might you need from Emil's collection?

LC: One time I did an Indonesian documentary where I had to do some Balinese and Javanese style stuff, so I had to rent some Balinese and Javanese bells and gongs, some real primitive antique drums with the stretched calf heads or some kind of cowhide, some Indian drums, and a bunch of different things. I just created things like a kid in a sandbox. It's fun. Sometimes it can be a real pain, though.

RF: Like when? What is it you come up against in your job?

LC: There are certain people who will put you through the grinder and have you play all kinds of different things. I'm going to stick my head on a chopping block now, but Richard Perry is notorious for that kind of thing. He wants to hear all the options, and then he'll go back and say, "Let's go back to the first thing you did," after you've gone through six cases of equipment. He'll say, "I think something should be here, but I don't know what. Give me something." So you'll try a couple of different things. Kenny Loggins once put me through the ringer. I was just playing a cowbell, but I played this cowbell about 50 different ways.

RF: How do you play a cowbell 50 different ways?

LC: It's not easy. It can depend on where you put your thumb when you're holding the bell. The farther down you place your hand, the more it's going to ring. Also, you can hit the bell either on the side, or on the back, you can use different beaters, and as far as execution, you can use a different stroke, and also you can use a different bell. You can tape the bell up. There are so many different ways you can do it. People think a triangle is just a piece of metal that's put into a triangle shape. There are a lot of different ways to play a triangle. You can play it on the top, you can play just underneath the peak, and the farther down you go, you'll get a different tone. Each side is different, and the way you hold it, the way you strike it, and the beater that you're using all affect the sound. There's a whole science behind it. You've got to give people as many options as you can. I don't even know how I figured all of this out, except some of it must be a combination of my classical training and common sense.

RF: So back to Kenny Loggins. You played the cowbell 50 ways, and then what?

LC: And then he told me, "Play it how you played it when you first started." I was like, "Kenny, I've got a headache." And I don't even know if that cowbell part made the album. It's those kinds of obstacles you come across. But that's the gig. You're there to give them what they want. That's where that discipline comes in. I first met Jeff Porcaro on a Diana Ross session. We were doing "Fire." I was in this back room away from the main cats, playing this tambourine in a reggae style, where you just shake it up and down. That's all I did the whole

evening. There are a million stories like that. Quincy Jones once hired me on a Saturday at triple scale to do handclaps with John Robinson for the album *The Dude*. It was the most expensive overdub I've ever done, without equipment. At the end of the session I thought, "I should have shown up with each hand in a little Anvil case and had a roadie carry me in."

RF: Do you worry about your hands?

LC: Not really. There was a time when I did, but now I play consistently and I play the right way all the time. When I first started, I was getting bone bruises and cuts from letting my skin dry out and then playing. Your hands have to be moist. If you're going to play hard, you have to keep them lubricated and take care of them.

RF: Let's go to the live arena for a minute. You're obviously going to be playing harder.

LC: No matter how hard or soft you're playing, there still has to be an element of consistency. You have to be there at all times, no matter what you're doing. Even in the studio, you have to be consistent. Nobody hires you for excuses; nobody wants to hear you complain that your arms hurt. Then you're doing something wrong. Your circulation is not happening. When you start cramping up, it's because of a lack of oxygen. Don't start putting your arms out and adjusting the way you're playing just because your arms are cramping up. Give yourself more oxygen. Any athlete will tell you that. If your arms or legs start getting tired, take a couple of breaths,

back off, and then jump right back into it before you get cold. Stamina is everything.

RF: Is it accurate to say that 99% of what you do in the studio is overdub?

LC: I'd say 85%. I'm one of the few guys who will be called for a tracking date.



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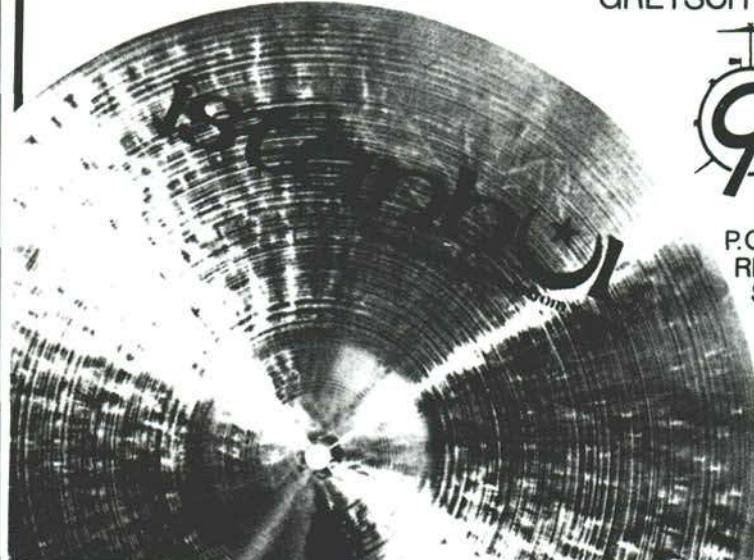
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RF: Since overdubbing is most of what you do, isn't that kind of a drag sometimes, being all by yourself?

LC: Sometimes it is. It's very impersonal sometimes. I would rather be on a tracking date, but sometimes you just can't be on one. Sometimes it doesn't add or doesn't help. Sometimes it's best for the producer, as far as time goes, to overdub. If I come in and overdub after the fact, I can do an

entire album probably in one day or a day and a half, whereas in the other situation, they'd have to hire me for the whole tracking date, and then I'd probably have to come back and add some more stuff later.

As for tracking dates, I've done some direct-to-disc things where you really have to be right on. A lot of preparation goes into that. You have to set yourself up properly and sort of choreograph what you're

going to do: "Okay, I'm going to play congas here, and on the chorus I am going to go here," and I make sure that every time I change over to an instrument, I do it right on the money. I hate to hear a percussionist who is playing congas here, and then two measures into the chorus he decides to pick up a tambourine. Where's the form? Where's the brain work here?

RF: Does a lot of rehearsal go into a situation like that?

LC: Sometimes. But sometimes guys will just hire me because I'm really good at just off-the-top-of-my-head kind of stuff. I'm notorious for first takes as far as overdubs go.

RF: Tell me about some first takes.

LC: "Love's Light In Flight," from Stevie Wonder's *The Woman In Red* soundtrack—the conga part on that was done at like 6:00 or 7:00 in the morning. We were on tour in Hamburg, Germany, and he was finishing up the album. He was behind schedule, and the hounds were at his heels. We did a concert, and after the concert, I got word that Stevie wanted to talk to me. I went in and he said, "I want you to come to the studio with me tonight." I said, "Okay, cool." That was about 12:00 at night. We went to the studio, and it took them all night to set up everything. I was playing pinball, waiting for them to call me and say they were ready. Finally at about 6:00 or 7:00, Stevie said, "Let's overdub." I said, "Stevie, I'm wasted. I can't do it." I was going to renege and say, "I can't do this because I won't be able to give you 100% on it." But he said, "Don't worry about it. Listen to the tune." So he played the tune, and halfway through it, I told the engineer to stop so we could get a sound. I said, "After we get a sound and we start, I don't want you to touch that stop button." Boom—one take. The only thing we had to redo was at the end of it, where Stevie wanted a conga roll, which I didn't originally do. What is on that soundtrack is what came out first. It was a do-or-die situation, and I was very proud of myself.

RF: You seem to like being on the spot.

LC: That sense of not knowing what can happen from moment to moment really adds to what you might play and what you might not play. It depends on how ballsy you are and knowing when and when not to take chances of falling on your face, and jumping back up and doing it again if you do.

RF: Have you fallen on your face recently?

LC: I did a gig at the Baked Potato with Uncle Festive for the first time. I had only heard some of their music, and their stuff gets kind of intricate. There was no rehearsal or anything. "What's the next tune?" And they give me the title. "But what is it?" Even if I just get a fingernail hold on what the tune might be—"It's a samba; watch for the breaks"—fine. I have good ears, though, so sometimes I can anticipate what somebody is going to do. It works with a lot of the drummers I have worked with because I think like a drummer, and that helps. But

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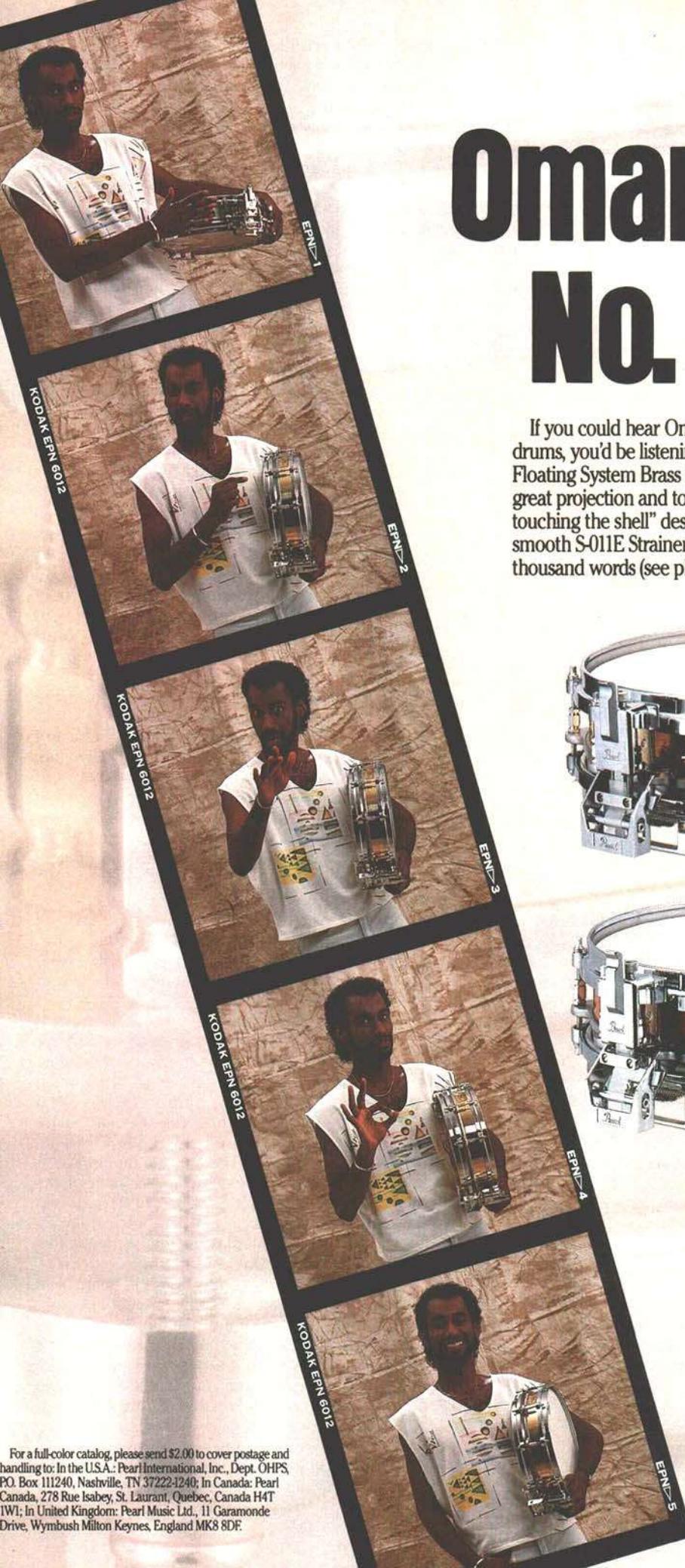
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sometimes it doesn't, and then you have to use the old saying, "When in doubt, lay out." Or you go for it, and if you fall on your face, so what? At least you had the balls to try it.

Last year, when I went on the road with Dan Fogelberg, I didn't even know who Dan Fogelberg was. Russ Kunkel called me up, and when I got there, they had already rehearsed for a month. I went to Kunkel's house, listened to a rehearsal tape, and four days after I got back from Japan, I was on the road with them after only one full rehearsal in Texas, which was just a run-through. The following night, the first gig, everything was cool. It's that pressure thing that I like. It gives you a certain attitude that I enjoy.

RF: What variables do you have to take into account in the studio vs. live?

LC: First of all, you're dealing with a controlled situation in the studio. Live, it not only has to sound good, but there's a certain amount of showmanship that has to go along with it, although there are a lot of people who do it more than others do. I believe in an equal balance, and I tend to swing more towards the playing aspect than looking good. As far as the live sound, you have to make sure you project like crazy. It depends on who you're playing with, too. If I'm playing with Toto, I need some amplification to be able to compete with them.

RF: What would you use?

LC: With them I've used louder congas, congas with a wood shell, but with a fiber-

glass coating on the outside for projection. I don't have to hit the drum as hard, so I can play longer and let the drum carry the sound.

RF: How do you feel about electronics?

LC: I'm using some right now with the Karizma record we're doing. They belong to Carlos Vega. I'm usually a horse-and-buggy kind of guy. I've never bought electronic equipment. I've never really had the need to. I've used them for various live things, but not much in the studio.

RF: How did you break into the studio scene?

LC: Melissa Manchester brought me out here. That was my first big break. I toured with Melissa in 1975, and I came out here to L.A. and did an album with her. We went back to New York, and everybody packed their things and moved here. I said, "I'm not going to let my first big gig slide by. Ma, I've got to go. I'm moving to California." So at about 19, I moved to California. Melissa's producer at the time was Vinny Poncia, who I really have to thank for a lot of things. He was the first one to really stress fitting into the music. He also introduced me to Richard Perry and a lot of other people. I learned a lot working with Vinny, and one thing led to another. Word of mouth in this city travels like wildfire. If you play here enough and you're happening, people will hear about it all over the place. I love New York; it's where I was born and raised, but I wouldn't go back. I came out to L.A. and nobody knew me, but I came out with that gig. I haven't looked back since.

RF: What were your goals when you came out here?

LC: I wanted to play with everybody, and that's still my goal.

RF: Live or in the studio?

LC: Everything. If I stick to one style of music or to studio work as opposed to live, or vice versa, I get bored real quick. I want to play country & western and I want to play classical.

RF: Have you ever played country music?

LC: Yes. I played on two of Dolly Parton's albums. I also played congas on the theme to 9 to 5. Obviously there isn't that much percussion in country music, but it's just a matter of how daring you are and if you want to cross those borderlines. There are do's and don'ts in certain styles of music. A lot of it is just gaining the respect of the people who employ you. You have to win their confidence.

RF: What about playing with someone like Al Jarreau or David Sanborn?

LC: That really comes from the heart. That type of music is really emotional, especially Sanborn. I did one album with him, *Voyeur*, that is the most romantic thing I've ever worked on. I just let my emotions go. It was the first time I ever did a timbale solo like the one I did on that record. It was real tasty—not real loud, but something you would normally never, ever hear.

RF: You've done some road work with Sanborn. Who else have you worked with live?

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LC: Melissa, Toto, Boz Scaggs, Neil Larsen, Ricky Lee Jones. I've worked on and off with Al Jarreau through the years, and I play with the Crusaders currently.

RF: I hear they're not easy to work with.

LC: Are you kidding? Those guys are the salt of the earth. They're wonderful. They have had their problems; I'm not going to call you a liar. But the thing is, they know what they want and they will not settle for anything less. They want a groove. They know what they're talking about. These guys have been around for a while. I don't find it hard getting along with them at all, though. We're buddies on a personal level, and musically, I understand everything that they want.

RF: What is it you look for in a drummer and in a bass player to create that groove you need?

LC: Just good playing. You've got to feel the music. It can't be all up here in the head. It's got to be in the heart. That's what I look for. There are a lot of people I like to work with. There are the obvious bass players like Nathan East and Jimmy Johnson.

RF: How about drummers?

LC: James Gadsen. Talk about a groove-master—my God. Steve Gadd, Dave Weckl, Vinnie Colaiuta. Jeff Porcaro, who gives his all. If you're recording with him, you had better make sure that the tape is running at all times, because he gives it all to you, and he gives it all to you now. If he has to do ten takes, as far as he's concerned, it don't happen. Carlos Vega is blood of my blood. He's my closest friend, Godfather to my first child, my running buddy. If you're talking about someone I can relate to on all levels and in any situation, that is my man. In fact, I can compare playing with him to playing with Jeff. When we play, there's a whole different language going on. There were times when Jeff and I were playing with Boz Scaggs, and we were doing things that were just incredible. I wouldn't even be facing him and we would be playing together, like we had rehearsed it forever. With Carlos, it goes a little deeper because we have blood between us. He's a Cuban, born in Havana, and I'm Puerto Rican, born in New York. We feel very strongly about music. Who else? Russ Kunkel—beautiful guy. Talk about a heart of gold. Richie Hayward—he's a wild man. He's tickled my backbone many times. Sonny Emory—we were doing the Crusaders together, and we went on the road with the Joe Sample Quartet. That was a happening band. Walfredo [Reyes, Jr.]—he's wild. He fears nothing. John Ferraro—he's one of the more underrated cats. Paul Leim—he's a little beast; he's got such raw energy.

RF: What is it you want from a drummer?

LC: Aggression. Don't pitty-pat. That has pissed me off about a couple of drummers. To name one, Harvey Mason. I've done some gigs with him where he's just been up here playing the cymbals, and it's, "Give me a backbeat, man!" I hope he reads this. What really ticks me off is that it's there, but he's got it in the closet somewhere. If

you're going to be a drummer, be a drummer. You've got to carry it all. Vinnie Colaiuta—when I first played with him, I needed a crowbar to wedge a spot where I could play. "I'm on stage with you. Can I play?"

RF: You sound pleased about that. Can't that be a problem?

LC: It can be if you have a bad attitude about it. Some percussionists would go, "The hell with that. I'm not going to play with this guy who is playing all over the place." But with me, it's "You want to play fast? Okay, come on babe. I can run with the best of 'em. Come on, me and you." I never let a musician intimidate me, musically or otherwise. There's no room for that. And Vinnie is such a sweetheart. He's actually toned down some, and he's really become the ultimate professional.

RF: Has there been anything particularly enjoyable you've worked on recently?

LC: I recently did a Joe Sample album. I recorded with Simply Red.

RF: Was there a substantial space for you to play in on that one?

LC: There was space all over the place; I had to keep myself from overachieving. When you especially dig something, you all of a sudden hear all these things you can do. First of all, you have to look at the track sheet to see what's allotted, and then think about whether the song really needs it. That's one of the instincts that any good musician has to develop—how much and when. It's sheer instinct, and comes from your love of the music and how sensitive you are.

RF: What about special projects in your past?

LC: As far as I'm concerned, everybody and anybody I've worked with is a special thing, because it's always a challenge. One shouldn't be considered more special than another just because one person might be a bigger name.

RF: I'm curious what someone who has done all that you've done has to look forward to.

LC: That's a good question. I'm at a place that I've really worked hard to get to. I'm sort of at a plateau right now. One of the things I would like is for Karizma to circulate in the States and not just Japan. If the opportunity came about, I would love to devote myself 24 hours to that band. It comes down to what you're able to put into somebody else's album. They might have a preconceived idea of what they want. Karizma gives me so much more freedom. It's given me an opportunity to write and a no-pressure situation to experiment. I want to continue to be a first-call studio musician. Helping people fulfill their musical vision is cool. But I've reached the goal of becoming a studio musician, so I'm not sure what's next. It's just like football. Once you get those ten yards, you've got to set another goal. You can't just stay stationary. That's the worst thing you can do because everything will pass you by.



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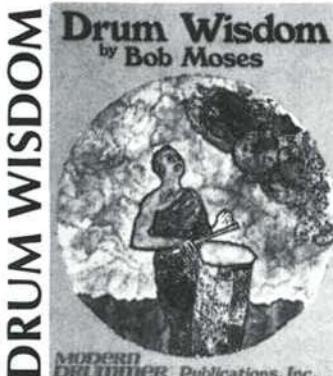
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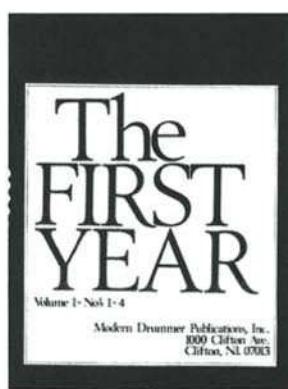
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MUSIC KEY

The shekere is an Afro-Cuban instrument made of a dried and hollowed gourd with a net of beads, seeds, and/or other hard objects strung on its exterior. It is related to many other instruments with different names found throughout Africa and other places. The most direct ancestor of the shekere is probably the agbe of the Yoruba people of Nigeria, in terms of its construction, the technique with which it is played, and the fact that Yoruba influence is extremely evident in Cuban music.

Although playing the shekere (as with any instrument) can be approached from a purely creative and personal perspective, I feel that you will greatly benefit from the study of the shekere in the traditional context. Then you will be much better prepared to develop your own conception.

In Cuba, the most important style of music in which the shekere plays a major role is the Yoruba-derived religious form known as

Guiro (pronounced "WEE-doh"). The shekeres themselves are known as guiros, giving name to the form. To be clear, I should mention that in popular Cuban dance music, the word guiro refers to a smaller gourd, usually with an oblong shape, which is "scraped" with a striker made of wood, wire, or plastic. This instrument is also called guayo and has no net of beads. In today's popular Cuban dance music and jazz, the shekere is being used much more than in the past.

The versatility of the shekere, expressed through its dynamic range, "colors" and effects possibilities, and downright funkiness, is what makes it an essential tool for the modern percussionist.

It will be of great value if you can observe some good shekere players and/or get a good instructor to develop a comfortable technique. The key word is "comfortable," because the shekere can be excessively physical and wipe you out in about one minute if not played correctly. I could never totally explain it to you with the written word, but let me stress that the "secret" to developing ease in your playing is to do most of the work with your wrists (sound familiar?). You'll know when you're *not* doing this because your shoulders and arms will stiffen.

In the traditional guiro style, three shekeres are commonly used, each with a distinct pitch. The two higher-pitched instruments hold steady patterns while the larger, lower-pitched shekere provides the embellishments and the "conversation." A guataca (hoe blade) or other bell-type instrument usually accompanies the shekeres. Sometimes one or more tumbadoras (conga drums) are used.

Examples 1a and 1b show the most common bell patterns for the guiro rhythm. These patterns also happen to be extremely common throughout Africa. Use one or the other. Example 1a is the more widely used of the two.

1 a 3 —3— —3— 3



1 b 3 —3— —3— 3



Examples 2, 3, and 4 show the shekere patterns from the highest pitched (smallest) to the lowest (largest, usually), respectively. If you are right-handed, the right hand goes on the bottom of the gourd, while the left hand is placed around the open-ended neck at the top. Within the examples are arrows, which indicate up-strokes ("throwing" the net of beads towards the top of the shekere) and downstrokes ("throwing" the net of beads towards the bottom of the shekere). In the examples, the "o" means open tone, which is attained by striking the gourd at the bottom with the palm of the hand. In the following examples, each begins with a basic pattern (2a, 3a, 4a), and is followed by derivative variations (2b, 3b, 4b, and 4c).

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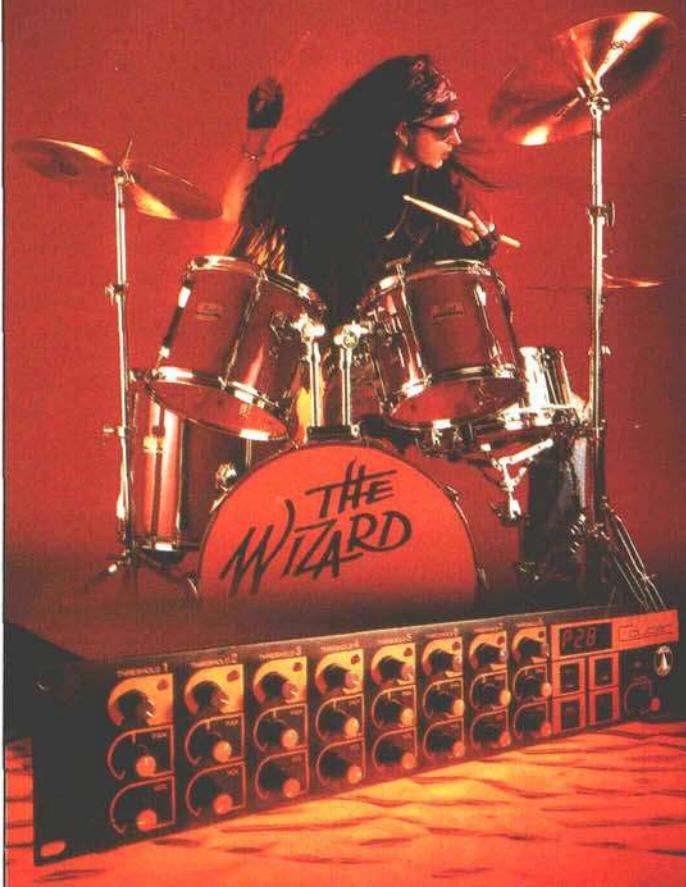
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briefly, thank goodness. I wasn't very good.

TS: Are you an accomplished pianist?

TB: Not really, just enough to write songs.

TS: You wrote several songs with the Babys. How did your interest for songwriting begin?

TB: Pretty much with every band I've been in, I've been part of the writing team. I've written quite a lot of tunes, and I've sung; I used to sing with the Babys quite a bit.

TS: From behind the drums, or up front?

TB: I used to go over to the piano and sing.

TS: Getting back to Strider, how popular was the band?

TB: Strider built a great cult following in England. Just before we broke up, we were really getting on top. It was a great band, a real tough rock 'n' roll band in the AC/DC mold.

TS: Then you joined the Babys, which was very pop-oriented.

TB: But I was still a heavy hitter with the Babys. Even though it was a silly name, we had a strong following here, and musicians seemed to love the band. Although it was pop, it was pretty technical too, as far as the music went. It also gave me a lot of exposure because even today, people will stop me in the street, recognizing me from the Babys, which is great. That band happened a long time ago, so we must have done something right. We did gain quite a following, and the drums were a major part of that band, especially on the second album, where we brought a mobile studio out to a ranch in Southern California and

recorded the drums in a big spiral staircase.

TS: Was that your idea?

TB: It was a combination of mine and [producer] Ron Nevison's. That was fun. Ron had worked with John Bonham, who was my hero at that time—and still is—so we were trying to emulate his big drum sound.

TS: And that particular sound became part of the band's trademark?

TB: It was part of the Babys' sound from then on, although it did start to diminish as the albums went on. We still got a big sound, but it wasn't quite as big as on that second album. It's quite a hard drum sound to get; you can't just set it up and go for it. The room size is very important to the way the drums react.

TS: *Out Of Order* has marked a resurgence of sorts in Rod Stewart's career. Can you describe any differences, if any, in recording that you've experienced between your first outing with Rod—*Tonight I'm Yours*—and the latest release?

TB: What we did this time is what we've really always tried to do, which is to get the best sound possible—especially the drum sound. To get the right drum sound in the studio is quite a painstaking process for us. We've tried everything, including relaying the whole drum sound back into the room with another set of speakers. That makes the drum sound even louder because that mikes the whole room up. What I would do is to get two speakers alongside the drumkit and amplify the drum sound

from the studio back into the room. So the dual microphones give it a fuller sound.

In every studio you go into, you have to know the room. I always use the room's sound, so we have to make sure that the room mic's are in certain positions, and we have to know how much delay we'll need for the room sound.

TS: You're really into recording, aren't you?

TB: Yeah, I love it. If I could be in the recording studio 24 hours a day I would be. I've got my own studio at home now, and I use that quite a bit. I go in there and write songs and try out new things. I love the whole technical side of the board, and mixing is a favorite process of mine.

TS: We were discussing recording with Rod's band, specifically.

TB: Well, after we get the right drum sound, the rest of the guys come in and work on their parts. We basically write the songs in the studio.

TS: So Rod doesn't come in with some songs thrown down on a tape or something?

TB: No. We did about two weeks in a rehearsal room with Andy Taylor this time, and played through some quick ideas.

TS: Are your own contributions encouraged within that framework?

TB: Oh absolutely, yeah. Anyway, then we went into the studio and banged out the tunes. Most of it was written in the studio, which is the way we normally do it.

TS: Do you find this way of working favorable?

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TB: I don't mind it; it's certainly different from what a lot of bands do. Going in and writing the songs in the studio is a luxury we can afford. Sometimes you get more of a spontaneous thing that you wouldn't be able to grab doing it another way, like in pre-production. I mean, if you practice a song forever, when you go into the studio it sounds stale. We'll grab something that's brand new, play it just once, and keep it. Sometimes it can backfire on you, because if you want to make it better, you're not always allowed to change it. But overall, it works. And most bands don't have that kind of luxury. They have to have ten, twelve songs written, and then just go in the studio and do it.

TS: Can you describe your contributions to the material for this band?

TB: I help mostly with the arrangements. When I come up with a particular part that I think will fit, it's kind of hard for me to portray that on the drums. So I'll go into my own studio, play it, and give Rod the tape, or I'll just sit behind the piano and play it for him. Then I'll go back to the kit and we'll try to put it together.

TS: Most drummers probably don't have that much creative license when it comes to structuring the songs.

TB: Well, Rod really likes to have the input from everybody. He relies on us so that he can work on coming up with the melodies and the lyrics.

TS: On *Out Of Order*, is there one track that stands out as being the most satisfying for you, playing-wise?

TB: "Lethal Dose Of Love," to me, is my own style—the old Babys style—coming out. It's that big drum sound, it's powerful, and it has a great feel to it. I programmed a lot of percussion things for the background on it. I like that one a lot. Some songs don't suit that big drum sound that I prefer, and I have to tone it down quite a bit.

TS: For the ballads, I suppose.

TB: Right, sometimes, but with some of the real slow ballads, I can actually get away with an even bigger-sounding drum.

TS: Speaking of ballads, what you do feel-and tempo-wise on "Forever Young" is different than most ballads. It's sort of a ballad with "legs"—that galloping backbeat that you play.

TB: Yeah, it is. It's a good song, it really is.

TS: What makes your drumming stand out, in fact, is your ability to take any song and add small but meaningful touches that sound distinctive. I think that feature of your drumming stands out most prominently live. Would you say that has a correlation to previous influences, or is it that you are drawing on your creativity spontaneously, as you play?

TB: I think it's just being creative. And with this new band, it's even easier to do that. Take the new bass player, Carmine Rojas. For the first time that I've been in this band, I've been able to let the bassist take the responsibility of holding it all down. Before, I wasn't able to move around so much. That's not meant with any disrespect for

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other guys who played bass in the band, it's just that Carmine's a great player, and with the new band, I'm able to stretch out more fully. Now I've been able to enjoy myself more, throwing more things in. In fact, I'm enjoying being in the band more than ever. It got a bit stale there for a while.

TS: The show moves from one style to another rather rapidly. There might be a fast-tempo rocker, followed by a ballad, then maybe something like "Twistin' The Night Away." I suppose that this variability really keeps you on your toes.

TB: It does, yeah. We try to incorporate everything in the show that we can. We play for two and a half hours, and obviously we can't get everything in that Rod's done. But there's a wide range that he's played during his life, and we try to get as much in there as we can. Keeping the tempos every night is quite challenging, and

making sure whatever it is we're playing is always swinging at the right tempo.

TS: Has timing always been a strong point with you?

TB: I don't have much of a problem with it, and I hope it has been a strong point for me. [laughs] I don't know, really. Of course I have to concentrate on it, obviously; everybody does. Some nights I might do something a little faster or slower, but I basically do things the same every night as far as keeping it in time. I guess it has been sort of natural for me.

TS: Do you ever use any machines in the studio to guide you along with that?

TB: I don't use click tracks, but sometimes we do use a little percussion machine, like Phil Collins does—a Roland TR808 or an E-mu Systems SB-1200. I might use those to play along with percussion parts, but not for time.

TS: I'd like you to discuss your live setup as far as triggering is concerned, but before we do, I should make mention of the fact that you have a unique live setup, visually speaking. You've got the acoustic kit in the conventional area on the riser, then you've got an electronic kit off to the side, with the bass drum set up with the pedal facing the audience. Waiting for the show to begin, I sat there wondering, "What is this guy up to?" Of course, when you do your solo, the setup becomes self-explanatory.

TB: First of all, what I'm doing live is so hard to get in the studio. We've always been able to get that big drum sound live;

that's not a problem. What I actually do is take the samples of drum sounds that I've gotten in the studio, which are all stored in my Simmons SDX sampler. I trigger that from my acoustic drums. So the combination of the live kit and the samples together gives me a huge drum sound. With the triggering, it's wonderful. With the Simmons pads I can go to any of 16 kits—16 different drum sounds.

TS: So although the Simmons pads aren't visible among the acoustic side of your kit, you're utilizing the system throughout the entire show?

TB: Yes. There are seven Simmons pads altogether, although I can't play that electronic kit during the songs because it's too far away; my arms aren't long enough.

TS: There's a significant resonance from all your drums.

TB: I don't go for muffling at all. It's really all down to tuning. If you can't tune a drumkit, then you have to muffle it as far as I'm concerned. Of course, for things like reggae drumming and with the music guys like Stewart Copeland play, they have to muffle their drums because they want that really tight drum sound. But to me, muffling for rock drumming really chokes the sound of the drum; it doesn't allow the drum to breathe.

TS: When you tune a kit that will be combined with triggered sounds, is that a consideration you must contend with?

TB: The main triggers are the kick drum and snare drum, and the samples can be

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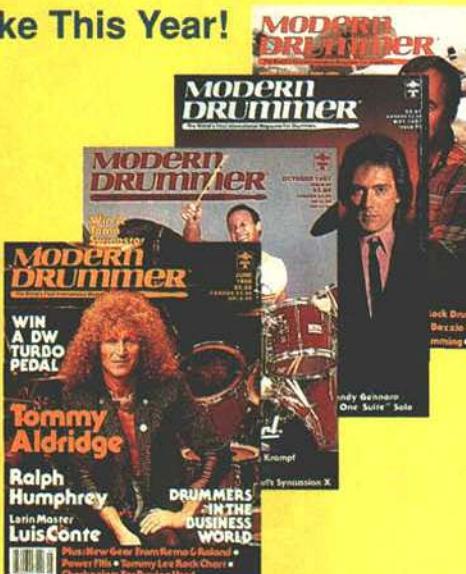
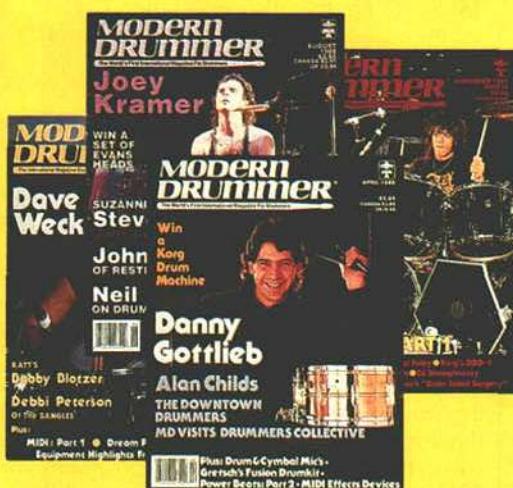
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tuned up and down where I want them. The kick and snare drums get new heads every day, and are, of course, tuned every day. It's tuned up to where the snare drum is really sounding its best. Then I'll add the sampler, and tune the sampler to the drum.

TS: So it's not the other way around—tuning the acoustic drum to the sampled sound?

TB: Well, every head doesn't sound the same. When you put a brand new head on and tune the drum up, some heads are at a slightly different pitch. The heads are supposed to be the same, but they're not exact. Plus the drum doesn't sound the same every day, so you want to tune it to the room, too. Then after all that, I'll put the sample in, and if it sounds good, I'll leave it; if it doesn't, I'll tune the sample to match the drum. What it comes down to is the speed of the sample and the delay time. The faster the sample, the higher the pitch; the slower the sample, the lower it goes. But then it makes the sample longer, so you can't move it up and down too much.

TS: You've recently begun using a double pedal on your bass drum.

TB: I was always against double bass drums because I felt that you could always do just

as much with one, and the only time you could use them was during a solo. But that's just not true. I've started using the pedal in places I'd never thought of before, and it's working out great. And the double pedal that DW just built for me has a trigger underneath it. It uses a magnetic pulse so that when the pedal comes down, I can trigger without delay. With MIDI, you always get a three-millisecond delay between the pickup and the sample, especially with the older stuff. What this pedal does is trigger before the beater actually hits the head. Because the signal hits the sample before the beater hits the head, they both sound at the same time.

TS: Do you find yourself playing different patterns on the kick drum now?

TB: Yeah, I'm starting to use my left leg a lot more, which is interesting. It's always been on the hi-hat, and now I can change over and do rhythms using the left foot.

TS: I was really surprised when you did your solo during "Do Ya' Think I'm Sexy?" That wouldn't seem to be the obvious spot for a drum solo. For one thing it's a disco number, and secondly, I wasn't aware that Rod had even kept that in his repertoire.

TB: Well, the way we do that song, it's not so much of a heavy disco number. But even the Stones did disco, and if they can get away with it, why can't we?

TS: But "Do Ya' Think I'm Sexy?" for a drum solo? Come on, that's a strange place for it.

TB: I agree. [laughs] But when it comes down to it, it was my choice, because in the end, I do have to be comfortable with the place that I do my drum solo, and this song is the perfect tempo for what I want to do. It works great, so why not?

TS: The crowd gets really into it; it's received so positively, yet you don't rely on gimmicks of any kind. Your solo is so musical and enjoyable that it reaches the whole audience. You get everybody on their feet.

TB: I just don't like to do the "normal" drum solo anymore. The only way I can really enjoy it is to stretch out and start doing some technical stuff, but then I risk losing the audience. I like to include the audience and add all the sampled sounds I've got: orchestra shots, bass guitar, etc. It just makes it fun.

TS: In the middle of your solo, you use that electronic kit off to the side, and you play the bass drum with your back to the audience, standing up. Was that your idea?

TB: Yes, I wanted to make it different. We do mostly 20,000-seaters, with 20,000 people going nuts, loving it. But it seems that in the reviews the day after the shows it's always, "Is it Tony Brock or is it Memorex?" You know, am I playing to a tape? That sort of attitude sucks because it's usually from people who don't understand the technology behind what I'm trying to do. I sometimes wonder if I'm taking it too far.

TS: But if the audience is wild about it, then who cares about the critics?

TB: You're absolutely right. But the thing is that I'm playing every single note in that

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drum solo, apart from one little sequence. That's when I get off the drum stool and kick in the SB-1200. The only thing it's playing is my bass drum and a shaker, and I put it on just so that I can walk around the kit and go to the electronic side, which has all the orchestra shots and the bass.

TS: What kind of unit are you running this through?

TB: All this goes directly through the Simmons SDX sampler and sequencer that I've just started using. And I've also got a whole rack of DX7 keyboards, which are triggered from that at the same time so that I get all those notes.

TS: You're a pretty laid-back person. Is it hard for you to get out from behind that kit every night and face the audience head on during your solo?

TB: People say I'm like a Jekyll & Hyde. But no, it's not hard for some reason. The lights go out, and you have to be bold. To be up there in the first place you have to be strong and confident. Obviously, drum solos are different because you're on your own, but it comes down to the old concentration thing and just getting on with it. I don't really think about it; I just get out there and do it. It's funny, because I'll watch the playback and go, "Is that really me?" Because I'm different as a person from that.

TS: Did your idea for the solo develop on the road or in pre-production?

TB: Well, the part when I'm walking out to the audience started a while ago, when my really old bass drum pedal broke off. It was an old favorite of mine, and it just disintegrated. So I'm right in the middle of my solo, and what do I do? I can't change the pedal unless I stop. So I stepped over the drumkit and kept the audience clapping until the drum tech changed the pedal. Then I came back to the kit. What I do now is just an embellishment of that.

TS: Has playing with a horn section on this tour affected what you play?

TB: Oh sure, absolutely. They might play a riff together, and then I'll play along with that.

TS: They can be quite humorous to watch.

TB: Yeah, in fact I've got to keep myself from laughing sometimes; they're great.

TS: There are so many things going on up there; it's a large band. What else is distracting at times?

TB: Rod's silly movements. [laughs] For every song, he does a silly movement just to make me laugh, and I can't help myself from laughing most of the time. He does the old "Ministry of Silly Walks" skit from Monty Python. We have a great time on stage, and it's easy, because Rod and I have worked a long time together. Most drummers have to follow the singer, obviously, and with Rod, I know exactly what he's going to do, like stopping the band and getting the audience to sing. It's never the same every night, but I know exactly when he's going to do something. I know how he's feeling on a given night, if he wants to keep going or if he wants to stop, where he's taking it.

TS: Things seem to have shaped up nicely with your career.

TB: I'm not complaining. Things have gone well, and right now, this tour has been really great. We've been selling out, the album has done really well, as have the singles. We keep adding dates. We'll be going to South America, Japan, and Australia before we end it.

TS: So are you satisfied?

TB: Yes, with this band I am satisfied. But that doesn't mean that I don't want to follow through with my own projects. That's going to happen. I would really like to be in control of my own destiny, my own plans, when there's time. Finding the time seems to be the trick.

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Learning Polyrhythms: Part 2

MUSIC KEY



As I expressed in my last column, my approach to learning, playing, writing, and teaching polyrhythms comes primarily from a brief study of North Indian tabla drumming with Pandit Mahapurnish Misra. I never became an authority on East Indian music, but I did learn something about working with rhythms. As I stated before, the term "polyrhythm" does not accurately describe the only essential rhythmical concept of Indian music (nor that of African music).

Concerning East Indian music, the system is a formula of all rhythms based on a mathematical foundation. The music is only in part based upon polyrhythms and polymeters. When improvising on a theme, one musician plays the basic time, while another improvises in that time or a related time. The relationship of the two time structures might be a simple one ($32 \text{ over } 16 = 2 \text{ to } 1$, for example), or a more complex one ($21 \text{ over } 12 = 1 \frac{3}{4} \text{ to } 1$). It is these contrasting rhythms during an improvisation that gives the music its rhythmic enchantment and demonstrates the rhythmic virtuosity of these musicians (the same contrasting rhythms that can be applied to our music when soloing and improvising).

Whatever the rhythmic differences might be, the Indian master-drummer knows them all and has learned them by understanding the mathematical ratio of one rhythm played in the same space of time as another. (In our system of music, this would refer to the space between bar lines or across bar lines.)

The concept of relating two meters played simultaneously is based on the mathematical term called "ratio." The best way to learn and understand polyrhythms is to break down some of the simple ratios into common rhythmic patterns using our notation system for writing music. By doing so, you will acquire the basic knowledge of how to create your own polyrhythmic improvisations and time feels, as well as build a foundation for playing music that requires this knowledge.

Polyrhythm Ratios

Here are the rhythmic ratios that I recommend you learn. We will be discussing them in the future. The lower space in the music indicates the basic pulse, while the upper space indicates the polyrhythm.

$6 \text{ over } 4 = 1 \frac{1}{2} \text{ to } 1$

$3 \text{ over } 4 = \frac{3}{4} \text{ to } 1$

$5 \text{ over } 4 = 1 \frac{1}{4} \text{ to } 1$

$7 \text{ over } 4 = 1 \frac{1}{4} \text{ to } 1$

$4 \text{ over } 3$

$2 \text{ over } 3$

Sound Patterns

In order to fully understand the significance of a polyrhythm ratio, you must first be able to hear the sound of the two rhythms as they are *simultaneously* being played. Let's start out by playing a quarter-note triplet.

as written:

or

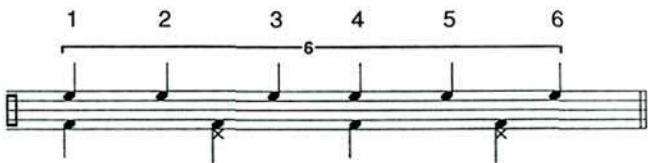
Now, let's subdivide the quarter-note triplet in 4/4 time by playing every other partial of the triplet over two bars, as follows:

Next, play the rhythm written on the top space with one hand, while at the same time playing the lower-space rhythm with your other hand. Play them on the same surface, like a snare drum, for example. The sound of the two rhythms being played simultaneously is the "sound pattern" created by six even notes and four uneven notes being played at the same time.

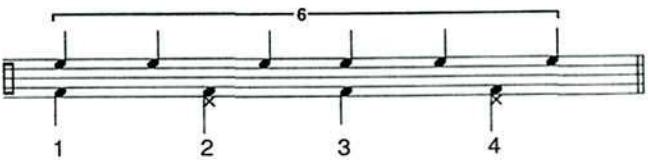
The sound pattern represents the basic components of a

polyrhythm. In this example (6 over 4), the sound pattern of the two rhythms is created by "broken" triplets in 4/4 time, therefore creating the basic sound of 6 over 4 when played together. Now that you know what this polyrhythm should sound like, it's time to think of this sound pattern as a polyrhythm.

To begin with, play the subdivided triplet while playing the basic 4/4 with your bass drum and hi-hat (or by using a metronome). However, this time think of the notes of the triplet as a sextuplet. Count and play the six notes, while keeping time with your feet.



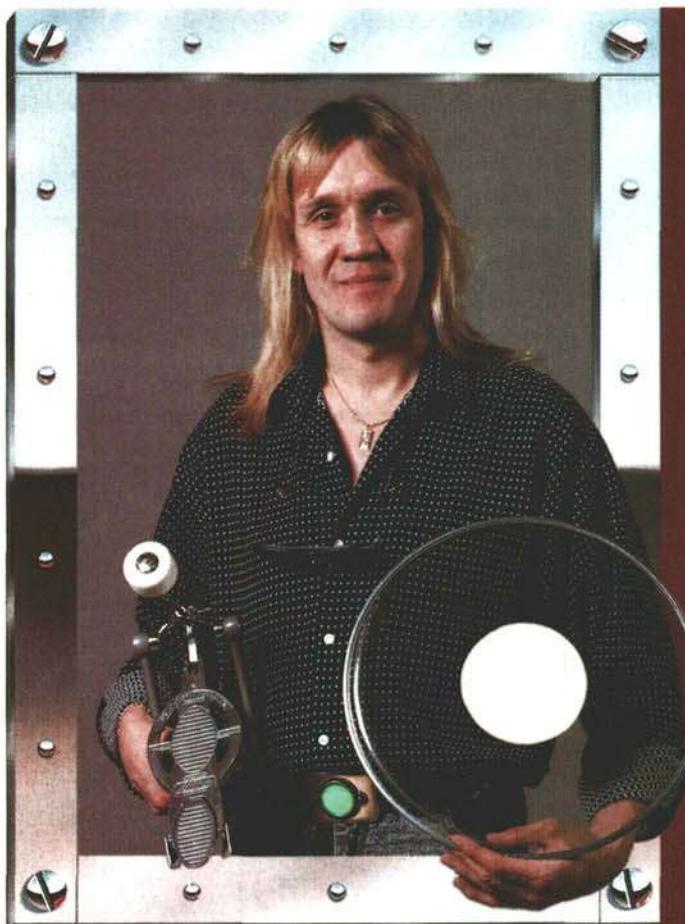
Now, try reverse counting; that is, count the four quarter notes of the bottom rhythm while playing the six quarter notes of the top rhythm. Learning how to hear polyrhythmically is also a mental process. By reversing the counting procedure, your mind is now hearing 4 over 6.



You now have firmly established the sound and feel of the polyrhythm 6 over 4. When you can play both rhythms simultaneously,

ously and count back and forth between the 6 and 4 without stopping the pattern, then you are ready to apply this polyrhythm. The following example shows the 6 over 4 polyrhythm applied in a few different ways.

Next month we'll look at the ratios and sound patterns of more polyrhythms.



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by James Morton

Mastering The Funk Shuffle

MUSIC KEY



The funk shuffle has become a mandatory inclusion in a contemporary drummer's repertoire of rhythms. Drummers such as Bernard Purdie and Jeff Porcaro have utilized the funk shuffle, with its laid-back feel and subtle complexities, in intriguing ways. The funk shuffle is a double-time shuffle, usually played in a slow-to-medium feel. Its rhythmic construction and slower tempo can give an experienced drummer plenty of room to play with the inflections and "inside" ghost notes, as we shall see later. In order to get a fix on what the funk shuffle feels like, let's first consider the standard 8th-note-triplet based shuffle. A shuffle can be produced by resting every middle triplet. For our purposes, it will be helpful to view this shuffle as a swing interpretation of a straight 8th-note rock pattern:

equals

Note that in the above pattern there is an 8th-note-triplet shuffle for every quarter-note count.

Now, if a swing interpretation of a straight 8th-note rock beat gives us an 8th-note-triplet based shuffle, as previously shown, a swing interpretation of a straight 16th-note rock beat would give us this:

equals

In the last example there is a 16th-note-triplet shuffle for every 8th-note count. This is the essence of the funk shuffle. Now that you understand the makings of the funk shuffle, here are some examples for you to try.

The following funk shuffles are more complex and require more independence skills (not unlike jazz-drumming independence). To make these patterns effective, make the unaccented notes *pianissimo*, almost ghosted, while really hitting those accents. The dynamic contrasts in the playing of these patterns are what make them come alive.



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PM: How did you get hooked up with UZEB?

PB: A friend of mine from Quebec City named Mario Parent plays keyboard. He moved to Montreal two years before I did. He played with Alain Caron, who is the bass player for UZEB, and he talked about me. He arranged a gig with Alain and a few friends from Montreal, and we played together. Two months after that, Alain called me to ask me to join the band. I was just finishing my studies at the Conservatory. Two months later I moved to Montreal and started playing with UZEB. That's now eight years ago.

PM: UZEB is not only a popular group in Quebec, but is becoming popular all over the world. Was the band successful right from the beginning?

PB: Well, no. We worked hard to become what we are now. At the beginning, we were only known in our own province of Quebec. We only got a manager about seven years ago. Since then we've worked together to get around the world, starting with Europe. We just signed in Singapore and the Philippines. It's not free—not a gift. We worked eight years just to get there. The point is, you have to find the good people to work for you. Our manager, Jean-Marie Salhani, heard the first album we did and just believed in UZEB. He worked very hard for us.

PM: Does UZEB travel to the States very much?

PB: Not really. We're just working on it.

We have to find a good person to work with us in the United States. We had a deal with IOU Records in Los Angeles that did not go through.

PM: When you first started playing with UZEB, were you playing with other bands in Montreal as well?

PB: Yeah, I was playing with pickup bands—just a few friends who decided to play one week at a club. But now there is no other band than UZEB, because UZEB takes a lot of time. If you want to become a good band together, you have to work together. You have to say no to other things. That's very hard for a lot of musicians to do. It's very hard to find three or four people to care socially and musically. That's why there are not a lot of groups like Weather Report or Steps; it's very hard.

PM: On your latest album, *Noisy Nights*, you play many different styles of music. Do you feel that UZEB is categorized fairly as a jazz group?

PB: We do have a lot of different styles and a lot of different influences. We play Latin, rock, jazz, bebop, so we are a fusion band in that way. I can play swing...I can play funk; each style is very interesting, and that's nice. We want to play like that.

PM: You mentioned Latin and fusion and jazz. Are all these influences something that you feel when you live in Montreal?

PB: Yeah. I think Montreal is a cosmopolitan city. For me it's like a small New York City, and that's fun. I spent a few months in New York City, studying at Drummers Col-

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lective with Frank Malabe. Don Alias was living here in Montreal, and I was playing with him quite a bit. But I didn't know how to play with Don so as not to disturb him. So I decided to go to New York and study all that. When I came back it was very successful. When I work with that Latin feel, it changes my way of playing drums.

PM: Did you bring this to the attention of the group, and did the group respond to it?

PB: Yes. Like I said, it changed my way to play *any* style. So there was more relaxation, because the Latin feel is like [gesturing and singing] very round. It influenced everybody in the band.

PM: What setup are you using with UZEB?

PB: I'm playing on Yamaha drums, which are very, very nice. I'm using Paiste cymbals. I've got different kinds, like the flat-top cymbal. I'm using Roland pads for the electronic drums. I've got a lot of electronic stuff, including the Roland 5550 sampler, a drum machine, and the PM16, which is the interface between the pads and the synthesizer.

PM: Do you use electronics a great deal in the band?

PB: We're not slaves to electronics. I want to say that especially, because it's very easy with electronics to become unmusical. With my pads I can play orchestral hits, I can play bass, or I can play chords. With the new stuff electronic drums can do, they're very helpful, especially in a trio. But if I don't use them well—musically—it can be very awful.

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PM: You mentioned playing chords, which reminded me of your classical background. Do you feel that your classical musical training has helped you as a drummer?

PB: Of course. In the Conservatory I was learning harmony and taking piano lessons. Every drummer should be able to play piano and should know what's going on harmonically, because if you know what's going on harmonically, it will change the way you play drums. You're not "just" the drummer alone in a box; you play with everybody. You know what's going on.

PM: What drummers do you listen to now?

PB: I'm listening, not just to drummers, but

to different types of music, like Al Jarreau, and Michael Brecker's new album. I really like players like Steve Gadd, Omar Hakim, Dave Weckl, and Peter Erskine.

PM: What advice would you give young drummers to help them play contemporary music in today's drumming world?

PB: You have to learn technique. You have to practice how to roll, and how to play rudiments. Everything on the drumset comes from rudiments. Listen to a lot of different music. But try to get your own style. You just have to be wild in your mind to grab everything that you can in music.



around the same time I heard Tony Williams, and I could see the relation between him and a lot of good jazz drummers. Seeing it live was a lot more inspiring than hearing any kind of record—even though the guy is local.

PM: So what finally made you come to Montreal?

CB: Well, Ottawa was once a good city for rock and pop music. But just before I left, a lot of clubs were closing down. That's when disco was coming in. Work was getting scarce. So I said, "If I move to Montreal, there's bound to be more work there."

PM: Did you start working right away when you got to the city?

CB: Well, I actually came down a few times to check it out before I moved. I did a gig at L'Air du temps, a famous club here in Montreal. Soon after my first gig I got some calls, and I wound up coming to Montreal from Ottawa at least once or twice a month. After two or three months of that, I decided to move down. And I did start working right away. I was the new drummer in town, and some people wanted new sounds, so I was there for them to hire. It's been going like that since I moved here.

PM: You're one of the busiest drummers in the city. What is a typical week like for you now?

CB: For the last eight or nine months I've been working six nights a week, doing two different jazz gigs. I work two nights a week at a club called Biddies', and four nights a week at L'Hotel de la Montagne. I also play different club dates here and there—sometimes dance music, sometimes pop music. I'm doing a bit of teaching at the University of Montreal, and also at the University of Ottawa. I have a few private students as well. The rest of my time I try to practice, listen to new records, and learn some new things.

PM: You're certainly a busy live performer. What about your recording experience?

CB: Up to now, I've done four jazz albums. The first one was in '82 with pianist Steve Holt. And then I hooked up with a piano player in Montreal named Lorraine Des-

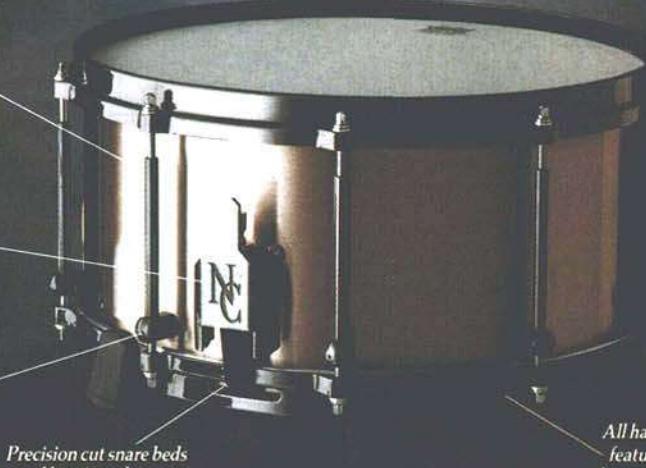
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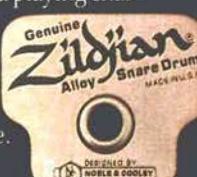
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marais, and started playing a lot of live concerts with her. Eventually we went into the studio, and in a period of two or three years we recorded two records that are being sold in the States, Europe, and Canada. Don Alias was a guest percussionist on one of them, and it was a pleasure to record with him. Lately, I've also done a record with a singer/saxophone player from Montreal named Johnny Scott, whom I've been playing with for the last two years at Biddies'. Apart from that, most of the other recordings I've made were for radio shows—mostly jazz recordings. A lot of those were done during the International Jazz Festival we have here in Montreal each year.

PM: Is becoming a well-known drummer in the U.S. one of your goals?

CB: Not right now. I'm satisfied with the way my career is going here at home. I'm teaching and playing regularly. I have a good place to live. I figure if anything is going to happen, it could happen here as much as it could in the States. It would certainly take more time in the States to establish a career like I have here. I might add that I've been to the States. I studied with Alan Dawson in Boston for about a year and a half. I also studied with Gary Chester in New York for a short while. If I go to the States, it's just to hang out and listen to different drummers.

PM: Who are some of the drummers you do listen to now?

CB: Right now, I'm listening to just about everybody who plays drums. It can go from country & western to fusion. I listen to drummers like Dave Weckl and Vinnie Colaiuta, and also jazz drummers such as Peter Erskine and, of course, Tony Williams. I also enjoy some newer drummers, like Kenny Washington and Danny Gottlieb.

PM: As a player and a teacher, how would you advise young drummers who play in Montreal?

CB: I get asked that every day, teaching at the university. Which is the better direction to go in? Should we go into the studio...play bebop...fusion? My answer to that is to get a bit from everybody. Learn how to play your instrument and eventually you'll go into your own style of music.

PM: If the phone were to ring tomorrow, who would you like it to be on the other end?

CB: I'd like to take a crack at doing more serious recording. Regarding live music, I would like it to be more on the Latin side. I would like to be surrounded by musicians who are into that right now, but I can't seem to find the time or the place to play it. I'm too busy doing the other music.

PM: Would you say that Montreal has the musicians to play that style of music?

CB: Oh yes. Every year there is a great improvement in musicians here in Montreal due to the Jazz Festival. The famous groups they present influence a lot of young musicians to practice. I think there's a lot of potential here in Montreal.

my money, and got my first set of drums when I was 15 years old. They were Leedy & Ludwig, and I was happy.

PM: Did you study with anybody up to this point, or were you self-taught?

GN: I had never studied. I played with my ears, and listened to movies and records. But at about 16 or 17, I went to study with Louis Charbonneau, the guy who plays timpani for the Montreal Symphony. After about two years, I quit. Louis said, "Why do you want to quit?" I said, "I want to play all different styles of music, and get experience. I don't want to keep playing the same tunes. I like jazz." Louis said, "Guy, you are going to regret it." So I stopped the conservatory and continued on my own. After that, I got a call to play the Mocambo

Cafe for a big show, at 17 years old. I got my experience playing the big show, learning and playing different styles of music.

PM: What was it like working in Montreal in those days?

GN: In 1951, there were many clubs—lots of jazz, dance, and show music. When guys got tired of playing shows, they'd call each other and switch.

PM: At this period, who was influencing your playing?

GN: At 17 it was Buddy Rich, Max Roach, Louie Bellson—those people.

PM: Did you get a chance to meet them when they came through town?

GN: I played with them. When Louie Bellson came to the Mocambo to play with Duke Ellington, we had a big jam very late

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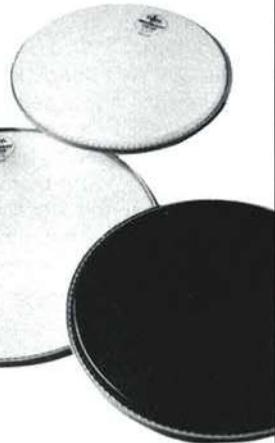
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in the morning. Jim Chapin used to come to town with his group, and we'd blow until 7:00 or 8:00 in the morning.

PM: In 1984 I was at the Blue Note Cafe in Montreal at your birthday party. You were playing that night with your band, and you performed on your homemade drumset. Was that the same drumset that you played when you were 14?

GN: No. It's completely different. For the second one, I started all over again. Somebody asked me, "Guy, we're going to have a big show, do you still have your garbage can kit?" I said, "No." He said, "If you don't mind building a new one, we'll pay for it. It's a big concert. The first part is going to be classical music and the second part is going to be your band." So I built a new kit. I bought all sorts of things and got some nice sounds. So then I phoned the concert people and said, "Come to my house." They opened the door and saw my kit and couldn't stop laughing. We made the concert.

PM: You also make your own cymbals, is that right?

GN: I did for a long time. I still have a few at home. About 12 years ago drummers would buy them. I still have the mold to make cymbals. But I stopped because I didn't have much money. If I had big money, I would like to open my own shop because I know what kind of cymbals the cats want.

PM: Do you play your own cymbals anymore?

GN: Sometimes I bring my ride cymbal.

PM: What kind of cymbals do you play today?

GN: I've got some Sabians and some A Zildjians.

PM: The 1950s were very busy in Montreal. What were you doing from 1960 to 1970?

GN: I played nightclubs, dance halls, and big shows. After that I did a big tour with Jean LaPointe, a comedian-singer. And in 1969 I played with Charles Aznavour.

PM: And what about the '70s?

GN: Shows and studio work. Also several TV series and variety shows.

PM: Did you ever study composition?

GN: No. I studied arranging, harmony, and counterpoint. When I write something, it's in my head. Before, when I used to compose a tune, I used to start by preparation. I don't do that anymore. I go to the piano, put a small bass drum under it, set up a tape and a good cassette to record the music and my voice, and I improvise. I listen back and take the best of the things and mix them together. Sometimes I get two tunes—sometimes four.

PM: You're now known for playing with your own band, The Pollution of Sound. When did you form that band?

GN: I started in 1975 with a quintet: two trumpets, electric piano, electric bass, and drums. After that, I added a tenor. I wanted to have some harmonic sounds. I didn't want to be influenced by the guys from the

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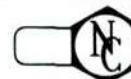
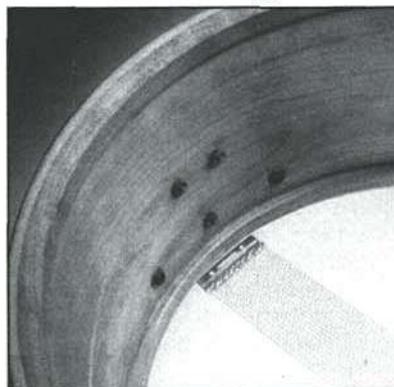
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States. I didn't want to sound like Art Blakey, or like any other group. When I write something, harmonically, I want *my* sound.

PM: Does that mean that you write all the arrangements for the band?

GN: Yeah. I write everything: composition, arrangements—I copy it all myself. It's a lot of work. I added a trombone to the band after a while to get a fuller voice. Then we started to do a few concerts. I've made the Jazz Festival of Montreal for the past five or six years.

PM: And what style of music would you call this band?

GN: Oh, it's jazz music. But I don't stay on one step of music. I play bebop, and I like funky things, Latin music, and once in a while a little free jazz. And then I bring in my "batterie artisanale"—garbage cans—to play one or two old standards. I wrote an arrangement as a joke. I think people like it.

PM: I've seen your band perform. Not only is it great to hear you play—because you are a master—but you're fun to watch.

GN: I like to bring something to the visual element. The visual part of performing is very important to musicians.

Like many Canadian records, The Pollution Of Sound, Guy Nadon is not available in stores in the U.S. Interested parties may write for a copy to CNC Enterprises, P.O. Box 6000, Station A, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3C3A8.



named Sedek Hakim. Then I went to San Francisco for almost seven years. I played with Martha Young—Lester Young's niece—for about three years. I played with Cecil Bernard, an African piano player. I was playing with big bands and trying to study. It was a beautiful experience for me, because I was meeting a lot of good players; there was a lot of good music in those years.

I came back to Montreal around '76-'77, and for a year or two things were kind of quiet. But then a few clubs started to open. Then the Montreal International Jazz Festival started—in '79, I believe. Most of the musicians started to practice and put bands together again, and a few club owners opened up jazz bars. That was the rebirth of jazz in Montreal.

PM: So, you came back to Montreal and you worked in the clubs. I remember that you worked several years at Biddies'.

BP: Yeah, I was very fortunate to work with Oliver Jones and Charlie Biddies'. We started to work in the club four nights a week regularly. Then we did our first album, called *Oliver Jones' Trio Live At Biddies'*. It won a Juno award—the Canadian equivalent of a Grammy. We also did some concerts around Ottawa, Toronto, and all around Quebec. So we were quite busy for three years. But then Oliver Jones left to tour the world by himself. I also wanted to do something for myself. So I decided to have a band. But not only a trio—you need a virtuoso to go out with a trio. So I decided to have a six-piece band. I formed the Ber-

nard Primeau Jazz Sextet in 1985. I wanted to play the Montreal Festival and I was influenced by the format of Art Blakey's group, with alto, tenor, and trumpet. I thought that would be interesting. I had some people to write for the band, and we started rehearsing and working a little.

PM: Did it take time to get as busy as you are now?

BP: Yes, it did. I had a radio show first, and then we did the Jazz Festival. It was hard to book a six-piece band in the nightclubs, so I thought of the schools—the high schools. I sent out many, many press kits and cassettes. I started doing concerts in schools. Then I had the idea of doing it full-time, so I got a grant from the National Art Council of Ottawa to promote jazz in schools. When I got that grant, I didn't have to work six nights a week in clubs. I gave all my time to that project. That's what I've done in the past two years.

PM: How do people in high school react when you come in and play jazz—for the first time, for many of them?

BP: It's like a surprise for them. They've never seen a saxophone in their life. They say, "What is this? No guitar? No big sound system?" The reaction is very favorable. We do original material and play for an hour. It's like a discovery for them.

PM: Do you think that more young people would be turned on to jazz if they had more opportunity to be exposed to it?

BP: Yeah, but I think it's kind of late at 18 years old to discover music. I wish I could

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do concerts for younger people, you know? I feel like by the time they are 18, young people have formed their own judgment about the music they like. It makes it very hard for us. I notice sometimes when I do concerts in school where people are 13-14, there's a lot more enthusiasm.

PM: What is the group doing now?

BP: I feel we are very fortunate. I recently gave 20 concerts in schools and did some concerts at the Maison L'Culture—the House of Culture, as we call it here. I also did some concerts on a radio show. We have an FM station here that does two shows a month regularly. I made an album called *Perspective* that was released recently. So, you see, I'm very happy about the situation here. I don't think I could have done all that anywhere else.

PM: In Canada, the government will give a helping hand to jazz musicians.

BP: Well, they did in my case, and I know a lot of people who got grants in the past two or three years—grants intended to help young musicians express their art.

PM: What do you feel the future holds for young drummers just coming out in Quebec?

BP: I feel that the ones who will survive are those who are very passionate for music, because it's a hard life. It's a beautiful life but one must persevere, to keep working and playing and studying. The ones who are very passionate are the ones who are going to make it.

PM: When was that?

RP: I started to really get involved with music after the Montreal Expo in '67. It was a world expo, and there was a lot of work. At that same time, I started to do some commercial music. In '67 the studios started to evolve very fast—like four-track, eight-track, sophisticated boards, and stuff like that. I got in to do some 45s, LPs, and film music. I was dividing my time between live playing and studio sessions, and I was working 12 to 14 hours a day—going from one studio to the other, and doing shows at night.

PM: Did you eventually have to make a choice between live playing and the studio?

RP: Yes I did. I started to like doing studio albums very much. You get to listen to your playing and really improve every aspect of it: time, technique, your sound. I worked a lot on drum sounds, and the studios gave me that opportunity. In '67 and '70, studios were not as sophisticated as they are today, with nice EQs and stuff like that. It was a little bit harder, but still, the fact was there. I was conscious that I was improving my playing, my timing, my touch, my drum sound. Since I had the electronics background, I got interested in the technical aspect of the studio. So really, I chose to go that way, and I grew up with that.

PM: Was there a lot of work for you right at first?

RP: Oh yes. At first, there was maybe two or three hours a day—a commercial here,

a 45 another day. The more I did, the more people got to listen to the tracks I was doing. I was getting more and more jobs. I was so interested getting the right stuff—the right thing for the track. For example, if there is a singer singing on it, then he or she must be at ease to sing, and you should respect the groove. I was doing fine at that, I guess, and I was getting a lot of work.

PM: When did things really start getting busy for you?

RP: I started to get busy in the '70s. At the time there were a couple of drummers in town who played commercial music with a different touch than I had on the drums. To me, this was due to the recording technique. Today, they mike everything that you have around the drumset. But at that time, there was barely one overhead and one mic' for the bass drum. And the guys were playing double-headed drums, and playing light, like commercial music. So I did the same thing I had done with jazz. I listened to every rock album that I could put my hands on that was made in the States or England. I found out that drummers were playing differently: They hit the snare harder, had a punchier bass drum, and were taking the bottom skins off. That was the fashion at the time. I got to be acquainted with that and was making a hit in the studio because I was practically the only one to do that.

PM: Tell me a little bit about your background with electronic percussion instruments. When did that all start?

RP: There was one point, in the late '70s I



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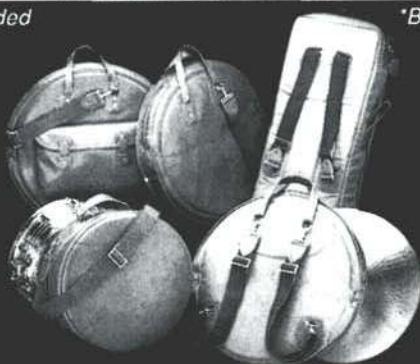
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guess, when you started to hear those funny drum sounds, from devices like the *Synare*. After that came Simmons. When I heard those sounds, my curiosity was piqued and I bought my first *Synare*. But when I plugged everything into place and started to fool around with that, I said, "It's impossible." If I had kept up buying those things at the time, I'd have had to spend a lot of money. Electronic drums were evolving so fast you couldn't keep up with it unless you were a millionaire. So when I was working in the studio in those days, if I needed a special sound from Simmons or other electronic drums, I would rent them. Today it's a different ball game. You have sequencers, computers, and samples of different drum sounds. You can even sample your own drums. Nowadays, you can buy equipment that keeps up with the evolution. The evolution is still there, but it's slower. As a result, I've bought a lot of gear.

PM: How much time did it take you to develop yourself into the complete electronic musician that you are today?

RP: It took me about six months to learn the sequencers, synths, drum machines—to learn their possibilities and their weaknesses. Something that to me is a challenge is to try to make those machines sound human. There is sophisticated software that allows you to play with the quantization or the shifting. You can really play close to human, but it's not like the live sound of a miked drum. But it's still a challenge to try to do that.

PM: Give us an idea of some of the more important equipment in your studio.

RP: The brain in the studio is the *Macintosh*. I use *Performer* as the sequencer software. After that, I have a Yamaha RX5, two D550's, a Roland S550, and a DX7II. I've got a Yamaha 24-track board, a two-track Revox, a Roland MKS20 for the pianos, and two *MIDIverb* processors from Alesis.

In Montreal, we don't do as many records now as we did in the early '70s. Today, everybody has their own studios in their basements, so they stay there and try to produce their own thing. They have their drum machines, so they don't use the studio as they did in the '70s. But I still do jingles and a lot of TV shows; it's my main work to earn my living. As far as records are concerned, I program for people. There are a lot of producers in town who like the

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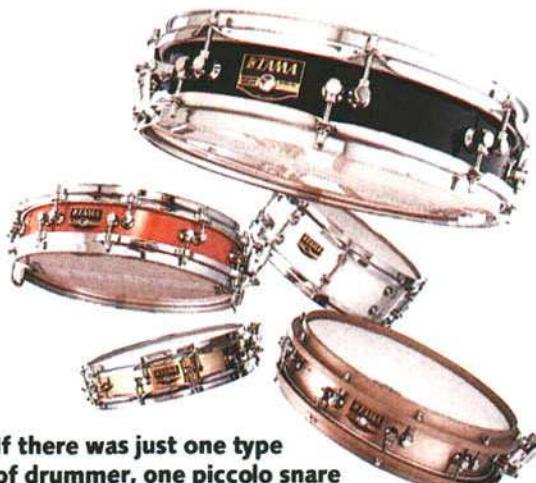
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fact that I program the drums as if I were *playing* the drums. So I'm a notch ahead of keyboard players who never played drums.

PM: Do you get the same satisfaction programming as you do playing your drums live?

RP: Well, I can't say it is the same satisfaction. When you play acoustic drums, there's the physical aspect of it. I mean, when you lay down a backbeat or you play a grooving pattern, it's physical, and it's fulfilling. But the way I program a machine is to play real time on an *Octapad*. So I try to lay down the feel. But the machine does not respond like a drum. When you hit a drum, you *know* you got the feel. But when you hit the *Octapad*—even if you play with the feel—when you play it back you have to manipulate the quantizing or shifting in order to get the groove the way you heard it when you played it. To me it's a challenge to achieve that with the machines.

PM: Do you still keep up with your live drumming today?

RP: Yes I do. I still practice once in a while—mostly rudiments. And I try to keep up with the new techniques of learning like Gary Chester's book, or Dave Weckl's cassette package of tunes, and stuff like that. You get to know how today's drummers do things.

PM: You're teaching at the University of Montreal. What is your program?

RP: It's a fairly new program leading to a degree in Jazz and Studio music. There is a 24-track studio over there with really state-of-the-art equipment. I bring rhythm sections into the studio, and we play all kinds of music. But we concentrate on playing the right groove and the right part for every instrument—like the bass, guitar, keyboards, and drums. There must be a lot of interaction between players in the rhythm section in order to achieve a good, strong feel, so that the tune can carry melody and sweetening and stuff like that. I've noticed that when you put young musicians who play well alone in a rhythm section situation, it takes a lot of time for them to learn how to play in an efficient manner. This is what I do at the University of Montreal, and it's a very successful program. I still take some students on drums, too.



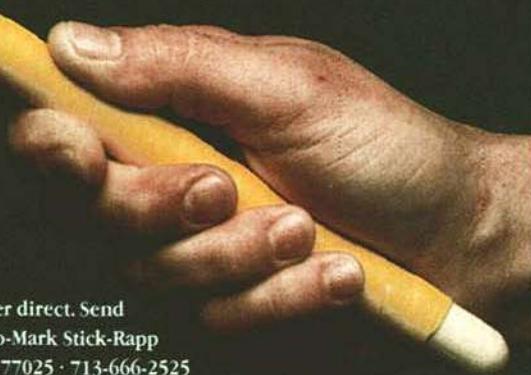
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by Roy Burns

Holding Yourself Back

A young man approached me a few years ago and inquired about drum lessons. He said, "I don't mind paying for the lessons, but I have a few conditions." I said, "Okay, what are they?" With some intensity, he said, "I don't want to learn how to read music. I don't want to learn any rudiments or any old-time garbage." "It's your money," I said. "Let's get to work."

My first problem was figuring out how I was going to communicate with this young man. So I asked him if he could play paradiddles. He replied, "No, but I've heard about them." I was beginning to wonder if this person was for real.

We started with simple sticking patterns. After he learned a few, I showed him how they could be applied to the drumset to create rhythms and fills. He began to get excited and wanted to learn more and more. Before long he was practicing rudiments and was beginning to see that reading drum music had its good points. He went on to become a good student and a much-improved drummer.

I learned a lot from my encounter with this young man. I realized that not all of the traditional approaches are valid for all

styles of playing, and I learned that to be a good teacher you must be flexible. You must communicate so that the student can accept the information easily. Each student is different. We do not all learn in the same ways or with the same speed.

I began to understand why many of us try—but at the same time hold ourselves back. We do this through conditions. Like the young man in question: He would learn only if his conditions for learning were met.

Another example of this was a young drummer who told me, "So-and-so learned to play just by playing in clubs. So why should I study?" My response was, "Why not do both?"

Life is so unpredictable that we must learn to seize the moment. For example, if a famous drummer is in your town to play and/or give a drum clinic, by all means try to be there. You never know what you might learn (or what you might miss if you pass up the chance).

It's popular these days for a drummer to give some private lessons the day after a drum clinic. Sign up for such a lesson if at all possible. The drummer in question may not be back in your town for a long time.

You may learn a few really helpful things. At the very least you will spend an interesting hour with an accomplished player.

No one way to learn is necessarily better than any other way. Learn whatever you can, whenever you can, any way you can. Life goes by faster than we realize—especially when we are young. Don't pass up the opportunity to learn. Do not say, "I won't take lessons," or "I won't learn to read," or "I won't ask for help."

The worst form of thinking is: "If I learn it all by myself, it will somehow be better than if I learned it from someone else." Again, you will be setting conditions for learning. It's a very immature attitude to in effect say to the world, "I will only learn if you do it *my way*." In the long run, all that really counts is "Did you learn?" *Results* count! Theories and conditions and restrictions in your thinking don't. There is so much music and so much drumming in the world and so much to learn that we must make the best of every opportunity.

Let's assume that you do want to learn as much as you can. How do you start? For me, paying attention is the key. There is nothing worse than listening to a drummer while his or her mind is wandering. You can tell that the drummer is not thinking about the music, or the groove, or the people in the group.

Paying attention means concentrating in a relaxed manner and constantly being alert—but not tense. It means focusing on what you are doing while at the same time being aware of what is happening around you.

In order to pay attention, you need to be open-minded. Listen to what is happening before you decide whether it is good or bad. For example, listen to an entire clinic before deciding if it was valuable or not. Read the entire book before commenting on the contents.

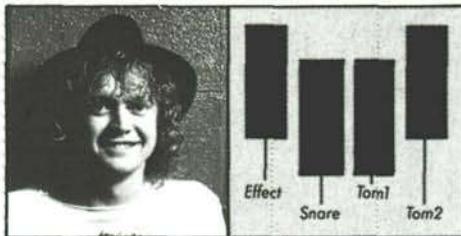
If you are a young drummer, remember that the decisions you make today will play a large part in where you will be later in life. If you have too many conditions for learning, or if you are limited or narrow in your approach, you will tend to hold yourself back. You will not progress as much as you might. To be successful in the future, you must start today. There is truly no time like the present to begin paying attention.

Once you develop the habit of being open-minded and free of conditions for learning, you eliminate much of the stress and struggle often associated with learning and growth. Don't struggle to learn, just begin paying attention. As the saying goes, "Today is the first day of the rest of your life." Better pay attention!

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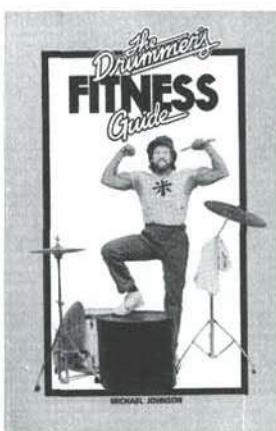
THE DRUMMER'S FITNESS GUIDE

by Michael Johnson
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Fit To Be Publishing
 3425 Cunnison Ln.
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Price: \$14.95

The Drummer's Fitness Guide is a handy book for drummers who don't necessarily want to dive head-first into a complete fitness routine, but do want to practice the basics of physical fitness while concentrating on developing the specific areas of the body that today's drummer should be concerned with. The author and publishers feel the book is more worthy to drummers in particular than other all-around-type fitness guides because of its convenience: Only those exercises specific to drummers' needs and that require a minimal amount of equipment were selected.

Though author Michael Johnson isn't a "name" drummer, he has been performing in various situations for over 30 years. This experience, along with his background as a personal fitness trainer, has enabled him to put together a concise, easy-to-follow training guide. The regimen Johnson proposes stresses moderate intensity, high repetition, light-weight exercise routines. Each exercise is accompanied by a cartoon-like, black & white drawing. Besides the more than 50 exercises included here, the book also discusses back awareness, warming up, cardiovascular conditioning, stretching, cooling down, and nutrition and rest. Johnson seems to be well-informed about his subject, and even goes into the metabolic reasons for eating certain foods at certain times. A helpful little book on a subject that musicians seem to be paying a little more attention to in these "Just Say No" times.

—Adam Budofsky



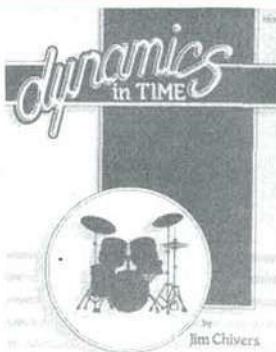
DYNAMICS IN TIME

by Jim Chivers
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Price: \$14.95

Most books about drumming contain page after page of exercises with little or no attention given to dynamics, except for the occasional accent. In *Dynamics In Time*, the study of dynamics is one of the main concerns, and it's about time somebody discussed the subject. In this 65-page book, Jim Chivers has come up with a well-written and well-conceived text on the subject.

This book contains five main sections. Sections I and II deal mainly with developing rhythmic command of what the author calls "the five most common rhythmic subdivisions." These are 8th notes, 8th-note triplets, 16th notes, 16th-note triplets, and 32nd notes. The author states that before a drummer concentrates on dynamics, he or she must have the ability to play solid time and play these five basic rhythmic values. The examples in the first two sections are based on these rhythms played in different combinations at the drumset over a bass drum/hi-hat foundation. There are many good "pointers" in these sections to help drummers develop rhythmic accuracy and "feel."

The rhythmic information discussed in the first two sections is applied in the rest of the book. Section III begins with a brief definition of dynamics and dynamic markings, and then proceeds



into some great examples for developing dynamic control on the drums. Besides the usual dynamic markings, this book employs graphs that give the student a visual picture of the proper way to apply written dynamics. Once these concepts are thoroughly explained in Section III, the examples in Section IV use dynamics on the drumset in time feels. Section V covers such topics as dynamic independence (playing a drumset pattern and having control over the dynamic level of any limb), fours (four bars of time followed by four bars of solo, emphasizing dynamics), rolls (using dynamics in rolls), and around the toms (moving around the drumset with dynamics).

There's a lot of valuable information in *Dynamics*. For the beginner, this book will give a good introduction and foundation into understanding dynamics, and for the pro, it will serve as a good reminder and way to really sharpen the use of dynamics. The author gives a lot of good tips, and he expresses them in a very easy to understand way. *Dynamics In Time* could definitely be a help to any drummer.

—William F. Miller

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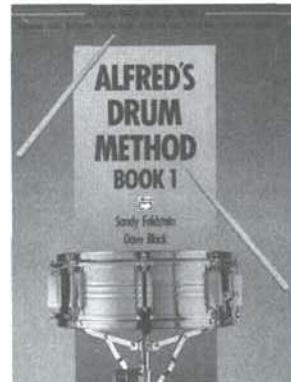
Publisher:
Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.
 P.O. Box 10003
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Price: \$7.95 each

These two books offer an introductory course to drumming that actually has a little something for almost everyone. Starting at the very beginning, Book 1 gives instructions on how to hold drumsticks, tune a snare drum, create a musical stroke, etc. From that point, fundamental playing techniques are introduced in a logical order, along with just enough musical theory information (note values, rests, dynamics, repeats, time signatures, etc.) to give the student what he or she needs to get started. New concepts are introduced gradually as the exercises progress and the student is in a position to assimilate them easily. This seems a wonderful way to build a student's confidence while increasing his or her knowledge at the same time—as opposed to overwhelming the student with a barrage of seemingly incomprehensible musical gobbledegook before he or she ever picks up a stick.

The book progresses rapidly through quarter, 8th, and 16th notes and rests, and dotted notes, all in 4/4, 2/4, and 3/4 time. Then rolls are introduced, followed by triplets, flams, and flam rudiments. Exercises in 6/8 time follow, along with the introduction of drags and ruffs. The last few lessons offer syncopation in a variety of time signatures, and introduce tied notes.

Almost every exercise is followed by a solo utilizing the new concept (and most of what has gone before), and certain specific marches are also included for further musical reinforcement. Although the book is primarily designed for snare drum, the introductory section includes information on how to play a concert bass drum and hand-held cymbals. Additionally, every exercise contains both a snare and a bass drum part. (Drumset players take note: If you are not strong on drumset reading, here is a method of introducing yourself to the technique of reading two lines of music at once. This can go a long way toward improving your skills at reading complete drumset notation. Working with the snare/bass drum combination exercises would undoubtedly improve your hand chops, as well.)

All of the exercises are well-constructed, and the production of the book itself makes it easy to read and work with. An optional video cassette, featuring Jay Wanamaker performing all the exercises, is available at extra cost from Alfred.



Book 2 picks up where Book 1 leaves off. Beginning with a brief review of what was introduced in the first volume, it rapidly progresses through the traditional rudiments. A section is devoted to orchestral-style playing, including multiple-bounce rolls, odd times, song forms, multiple-percussion concepts, independence, and some work with other percussion instruments. Jay Wanamaker then presents a section devoted to corps-style rudiments. The book concludes with final solos from each of the above styles, and a list of the Percussive Arts Society International Drum Rudiments.

These two books combine to present a thorough introduction to the art of snare drumming (and offer a wealth of exercise material to drumset players who may be weak readers or who may simply wish to improve their chops with work in the rudimental area). Teachers take note: Book 1, with its accompanying video, seems very contemporary in its approach to beginning drum instruction. This could provide a welcome alternative to having your new students ask you why they are studying out of a drumset "primer" written by a "noted drum educator" in 1936!

—Rick Van Horn

THE PHANCY PHANTOM

PHANTOM OF THE PHIELD

by Marty Hurley

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Price: \$5.00 each

These two snare drum solos capture the contemporary rudimental technique utilized by today's top drum corps. Marty Hurley is the percussion instructor and arranger for the Phantom Regiment drum & bugle corps from Rockford, IL. *The Phancy Phantom* and *Phantom Of The Phield* doubled as the audition music for the Regiment drum line in 1987 and 1988 respectively.

The Phancy Phantom utilizes nine meter changes, along with numerous tempos and dynamics. The technical repertoire includes various rolls (both open and buzz), diddles, flams, drags, and accents in endless combinations. The "phancy" part also features fake stickings and an exciting back-sticking part during the final measures. *Phantom Of The Phield* opens with some flashy stick flips followed by a great deal of flams and diddles. This solo is slightly longer and features some of the "hot licks" from several Regiment snare parts of years gone by.

Both of these solos are printed in a neat manuscript with all the stickings clearly marked. Marty Hurley has done the marching activity a great service by publishing some of his snare drum music to be experienced by those not directly associated with a drum corps. If one can master these solos—either in a competitive or recital situation—one can truly say his or her chops are "phantastic!"

—Andrea Byrd



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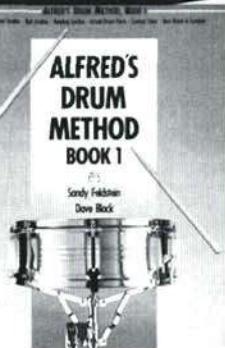
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Apples In An Orange Crate: Part 2

Last time, I offered some anecdotes from my past experience that illustrated what can happen when a band is faced with an unfamiliar or inappropriate situation on a gig. Some of those situations were humorous, and some were downright scary. But all of them provided some sort of learning experience for me.

The process of learning is—or at least should be—a never-ending one. Almost as if to prove that point, my current band faced a classic "apples in an orange crate" situation only a month or so ago. But this time, instead of being overwhelmed by the circumstances that created the situation, we were able to stop, evaluate the problem, and take action to correct it. Let me set the scene for you, and then I'll elaborate on what happened.

To begin with, my current group is a '50s/60s rock 'n' roll party band. We play a bit of contemporary music as well, but only tunes that still retain the fundamental '60s rock character (Springsteen, Billy Joel, Bob Seger, etc.). The instrumentation consists of lead and rhythm guitars, a bit of '60s-style keyboard (heavy on the Farfisa and Hammond 63 sounds), bass, and drums. We use no sophisticated synthesizer sounds, no electronic percussion, and no sequencers. We stress vocal harmonies, as employed by the Beatles, Beach Boys, and countless generic doo-wop groups. Our approach is loose and easygoing, with an emphasis on classic tunes played for the sheer fun of hearing and dancing to them. Within this context, we are quite good at what we do, and are pretty popular in the clubs we normally play. Those clubs are generally neighborhood taverns and bars in the northern New Jersey area, where the age group is basically 30 and up. The patrons of these clubs grew up with the '50s and '60s music that we play. And since so much of that music is back on the charts today—either in original form from the soundtracks of movies like *The Big Chill*, *La Bamba*, and *Dirty Dancing* or as cover versions from artists like Billy Idol, Tiffany, and Phil Collins—they can get into our performances on both a contemporary and a sentimental level.

However, once in a while we are booked into a room patronized by a different age group or people into a different style of music entirely. In the situation that occurred recently, we were faced with two completely different audiences at two different times in the evening, with a manager who

wanted us to please both groups while attending to his specific instructions—which actually presented a third set of requirements!

Instead of a local tavern, we were booked into a fairly classy floating restaurant built into a converted steam ferryboat. With dining rooms on several decks and a dance lounge up two staircases to the topmost level (naturally!), the boat offered fine food, entertainment, and a breathtaking view of the Manhattan skyline and other sights along the Hudson river. It was definitely a "class A" room. We immediately wondered what the heck we were doing there.

We were aware that the early part of the evening was going to require a "dinner set," since the lounge also included several tables and people would be eating dinner until well past 10:00 P.M. We certainly aren't a lounge band, but we were prepared to do some of our nicer ballads and quieter, medium-tempo tunes during this period of time. It called for a little restructuring of our set list, but that wasn't really much of a problem.

What we weren't prepared for was the fact that we were to alternate our sets with a disco DJ. Apparently, this room featured live bands only on weekends, and disco music the balance of the week. As a result, it had gained more of a reputation as a disco than as anything else. We found out (after we had already arrived for the gig) that the manager had hired us because he liked '50s/60s music. As far as the regular dance crowd was concerned, we were likely to be perceived as pretty alien.

Upon our arrival to set up on Friday night, we were met by the manager. Predictably, his first words were, "Keep it down guys; I've got people eating dinner." As I said, we were prepared for this. But we found ourselves wondering just how far "down" he meant, since the disco music was already playing and seemed fairly loud by "dinner music" standards. At any rate, we set up at one end of the small dance floor, using what appeared to be the stage as best we could. It was only four feet deep, so I put my drum riser top on one end (extending out a foot or so), and we put the amps on the rest of the stage. The guys in the band stood in front on the dance floor. We played our first set, being excruciatingly careful to keep the volume down. We received a smattering of polite applause from the diners at their tables, and one or two couples actually got up to dance to the

ballads. Other than that, there wasn't much response.

When we took our first break and the DJ took over, we were immediately made aware of our "alien" status in this environment. The disco music kicked in with a vengeance—and at three times the volume at which we'd been playing. The bass was thunderous and inescapable, in classic disco tradition. (As it turned out, our "stage" was actually sub-woofer cabinets built along one wall!) The material being played was quintessential 120-BPM disco, segued from one tune to the next in a seemingly endless medley of indistinguishable songs. By this time the diners had left, and had been replaced by the dance crowd: young people very much into disco dancing, clothes, personal image, etc. This was not our normal type of crowd.

When we went back on after about 25 minutes of this competition, we were a bit daunted. We played what we thought was strong material from our repertoire, but it didn't seem to generate much enthusiasm in the crowd. We were also still trying to adhere to the manager's dictum to keep the volume under control. (He only seemed to be around our part of the boat when we were playing; where was he when the disco music was blasting?) While a few dancers seemed enthusiastic about our "different" material and its correspondingly different dance style, the majority of the crowd seemed to be waiting on the sidelines for the "real music" to begin again—when we took our next break.

Suffice it to say, the evening went on pretty much like this. Friday night's score was definitely: disco 1, band 0. However, we were determined that this would not be the case on Saturday. We all tried to evaluate Friday's performance with an eye to what could be improved the next night.

We realized that we had come in on Friday as an "unknown quantity." The crowd didn't understand what we were about, and only found out when we actually started playing. At that point, all they discovered was that we were radically different than what they were used to. They weren't pre-conditioned to enjoy that; they only saw us as annoyingly unfamiliar. It was up to us to inform them—as soon and as often as possible—that we were something new and different—something that offered an exciting element of variety to the evening's entertainment. So on Saturday night, from the very start of the eve-

by Rick Van Horn

ning, we announced that "Tonight's music will feature the best of both classic rock 'n' roll and contemporary dance music," indicating that we would be providing the classic rock, while the disco DJ would handle the balance of the music. Instead of our differing repertoire giving us a handicap, we promoted it as an advantage.

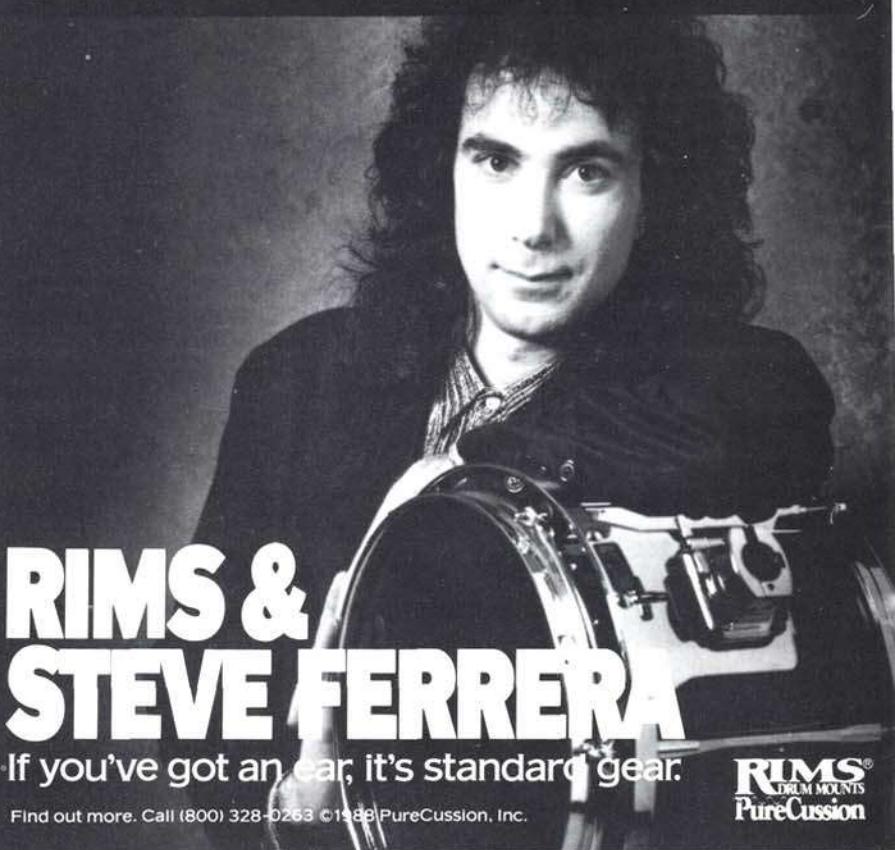
We also checked with the DJ to see if he had any original or cover versions of '60s tunes. It turned out that he did, so we arranged for him to put those tunes on for a half-hour or so before we started playing (thus subtly "setting the stage" for our opening). During the balance of the evening, he continued to mix '60s tunes into the normal disco repertoire. At that time he tended to rely more on the contemporary cover versions, but that was fine with us, as long as the material still tied in with ours.

In terms of our own play'n, we realized that we had adhered a bit too closely to the manager's request to keep the volume down. Once the disco music had established an intensity level in the audience's perception, we had to at least match that, or seem "wimpy" by comparison. We still kept the volume down for the first set while people were eating. But after the first break (and following the first disco dance set) we came back on much stronger, with tunes that were guaranteed dance motivators. Once again, this called for restructuring our set list, but the strategy worked marvelously. This time, the dance crowd got into the idea of rock 'n' roll dancing, and we all had a good time. (Interestingly enough, we never heard a comment regarding our increased volume from the manager. He only approached the stage area once, noted the packed dance floor, nodded approvingly, and turned away.)

We continued in this mode throughout the evening, constantly reinforcing the "variety factor" of our appearance in that room, and constantly "pushing the envelope" when it came to performance intensity. As the disco music got hotter, so did we. The crowd seemed to enjoy this "competition," and responded by dancing feverishly, buying a significant number of drinks (which made the manager even happier), and actually starting to request classic rock tunes from us. The final score on Saturday night was: band 1, disco 0.

So we figure we "broke even" for the weekend. But by doing so, we were able to prove to ourselves that we could overcome the obstacles inherent in an "apples in an orange crate" situation if we applied a little thought and musical skill towards the problem. The happy ending to this story is that we've been booked for several more engagements in that room. And now we're looking forward to them!

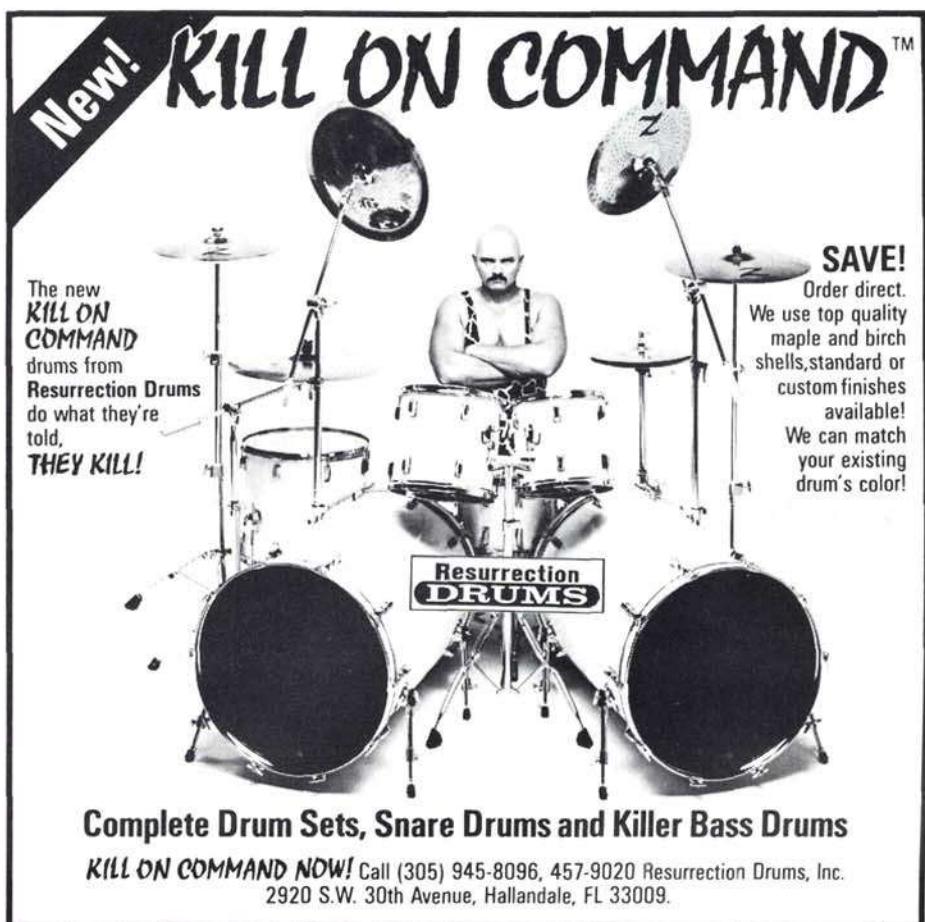
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HIGHLIGHTS OF P'88 A'88 S'88 I'88 C

The recent Percussive Arts Society International Convention, held this past November in San Antonio, Texas, was notable for its balance of artists representing all facets of drums and percussion. Of special interest to drumset players was a series of Master Classes given by participating drummers Joe Franco, Jim Chapin, Ed Thigpen, Steve Ferrera, Steve Houghton, David Garibaldi, Joe Morello, Danny Gottlieb, Peter Donald, Vinnie Colaiuta, Ricky Lawson, Sonny Emory, Chester Thompson, and Peter Erskine. Each artist gave two

15-minute lessons to students who signed up in advance, and the sessions were open to the public. The positive response from those who took advantage of this unique educational event was so positive that the drumset Master Classes seem destined to become an annual PASIC event. Next year's PAS convention will be held November 9-12 in Nashville. For information, contact the PAS, 123 West Main Street, P.O. Box 697, Urbana IL 61801.

Chester Thompson



A hand-drumming concert, with Abraham Adzinyah, John Wyre, John Bergamo, Jamey Haddad, Trichy Sankaran, and Glen Velez.

Alex Acuna



Joe Franco

Norm Weinberg



Emil Richards

Photos by Lissa Wales and Rick Mattingly

Efrain Toro



Steve Ferrera



Joe Morello & Danny Gottlieb



Vinnie Colaiuta



Harvey Biskin



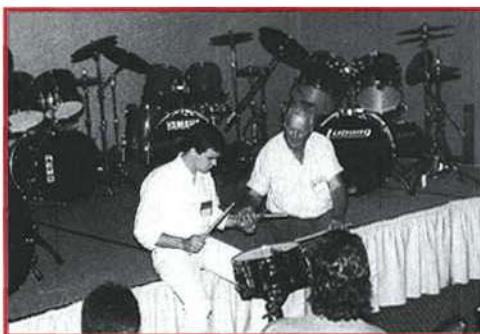
Sonny Emory,
David Garibaldi,
and Ricky Lawson



Peter Erskine



Michael Burritt



Jim Chapin and Ed Thigpen
conducting Master Classes



PAISTE'S NEW TOP-OF-THE-LINE SERIES

After eight years of painstaking research and development, Paiste introduced a completely new line of cymbals at this year's NAMM and Frankfurt trade shows. The new cymbals are so special that they are not designated by range numbers, like all of the company's other lines. They are simply known as *Paiste*. To emphasize this point, the cymbals carry a new logo: the Paiste name depicted as a handwritten signature.



I was given a preview of the *Paiste* cymbal line at the company's headquarters/factory in Nottwil, Switzerland. This gave me the opportunity to assess the new product, and to find out all about this latest creation direct from the Paiste brothers, Toomas and Robert. The latter now takes up the story:

"Put very simply, the ingredients that go into the manufacture of a cymbal are the metal alloy you use, and the way you work with that alloy to turn it into the finished product. There are two basic alloys that have been used in the manufacture of *all* quality cymbals for hundreds—perhaps thousands—of years. These are the B8, which is 92% copper and 8% tin, and the B20, which is 80% copper and 20% tin. Now, although we have been using these alloys very successfully, they are *standard* bronze alloys not developed specifically for making cymbals. We decided that we would soon reach a point where we would have achieved everything worth achieving in cymbal manufacture with these two alloys. But we weren't prepared to rest on our laurels and just leave it there, so the next step had to be to find a new alloy.

"No metal alloy has ever been created before *specifically for its sound potential*. So here was a challenge for us: to find something that would enable us not just to produce a further selection of good sounds, but the *best* sounds. We asked ourselves what the *true* sound of a cymbal ought to be—what qualities drummers might like to find in cymbals that they haven't yet been able to find. This wasn't a case of adapting existing cymbal lines; we were looking for something completely new. So we—the sound development people—were working with metallurgists who were experimenting to create an alloy with all the qualities we had in mind. Throughout the development period we were taking new metals that they gave us, making cymbals, trying them out, and then going back to them and

saying, 'Okay, but do you think we could get a bit more....' [laughs] And during this time, we also had to re-think some of our production methods, because there was no point in having a new alloy but limiting ourselves by trying to use it in the old way. I think this explains why it took so long."

Throughout the development period, Paiste kept in touch with an international group of drummers representing all styles of music, who gave comments and encouragement. Eventually, Robert was able to take the prototypes of his *Paiste* line to New York, Los Angeles, and London—to be checked out by drummers who were unable to be in Switzerland at the time. The response verged on the ecstatic, with players as diverse as Alex Van Halen and Billy Higgins showing wholehearted enthusiasm. Robert says, "Nobody had demanded a new sound. But when they heard the cymbals, it was as if they had all been waiting for something like this. Our main purpose had been to produce sounds for drummers and for music—not just to suit our own ideas."

So many new cymbal lines from so many manufacturers have entered the marketplace in recent years. Isn't there a risk that another line might only serve to confuse customers—particularly coming only two and a half years after the launch of Paiste's 3000 and 2000 lines, which were also aimed at the professional level? Marketing Director Toomas Paiste answers, "The point about the 3000 and 2000 is that they came out at a time when we were upgrading our budget lines. We wanted to do that regardless of what was going on at the professional end. We brought out the 7000 and 400 as budget cymbals, and the professional-level cymbals were part of that development. We weren't calling them top-of-the-range cymbals specifically because we had, and still have, the 2002. The 3000 and 2000 series offer drummers a choice at that general price level. The *Paiste* line is something extra-special. We are putting it above the 3000 and 2002, and the price difference reflects this. If you are asking about our timing when it comes to launching new products, you must remember that the *Paiste* line has taken *eight* years to develop; two and a half years ago we couldn't predict when it would be ready. We don't keep certain things back and bring them out when we feel like it; we see the potential for something new, develop it, and bring it out when it is ready."

Getting around to specifics about the cymbals themselves, Robert says, "Up to now, a cymbal line has been like a 'sound family,' with similar sound qualities but different characters. The *Paiste* series represents different families within the same line. So there are cymbals with different tonal qualities and with different function properties for different musical styles as well." The series' equivalent of the "classic" ride

cymbal is called a Full Ride. Moving towards more specialized sounds, there are the Bright Ride, Dry Ride, Mellow Ride, and Rough Ride. For extra power there are the Power Ride and Dry Heavy Ride. Crashes come in Full, Fast, Power, and Mellow. The "classic" hi-hats are represented by the Medium and the Sound Edge, with Power and Heavy models also available. There is also a mellow sounding hi-hat which, at the time of this writing, hasn't been named. The series also includes Flatrides, Chinas, splashes, and bell cymbals, so that the picture is complete. The sizes available are in most of the regular even-numbered inch measurements, although there are 13" and 15" hi-hats (along with 12" models in Medium and Heavy). However, the development of odd sizes (like a 21" ride and a 17" crash) is likely to happen soon.

The appearance of *Paiste* cymbals is distinctive and appealing. They look a bit more "silvery" than other lines. Although this might indicate a higher percentage of tin, Robert wants to keep the exact specifications of the new alloy under wraps. (The international patents are pending, so the alloy can be used only by Paiste for the next 20 years.) The hammering and shaving patterns on the surface of the cymbals are complex. This has to do with creating the sound, but it does incidentally give the cymbals a beautiful, "shimmery" look.

The sound? Well, you just can't fault it. Almost anyone would be hard put to imagine a cymbal sound they'd like to hear but couldn't find in the *Paiste* series. They are strong-sounding, with great definition and presence, and are so harmonically accurate that their frequencies blend with other musical sounds without covering them up. They are transparent, like a colored lens being passed across your line of vision. You see what you saw before, but with the extra color added.

The cymbals are cooperative to play. The stick response and feel from them is as friendly as you could wish. But the *most striking* (no pun intended) thing about them is their sensitivity and consistency of tone at all volumes. They respond to the slightest touch and reach their tonal quality immediately. However hard you play them, the tone remains the same; only the volume increases.

Not surprisingly, Toomas Paiste says that drummers need to hear the *Paiste* series for themselves. "All the words have been used in the past, either by us or by someone else. Superlatives have been used to describe the quality of sound, but sooner or later it just comes over as sales talk. So if people are going to understand these cymbals, it is only possible if they get personally acquainted with them. If we just try to tell people, they won't believe it. People get tired of words."

—Simon Goodwin

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ZILDJIAN AND NOBLE & COOLEY LAUNCH SNARE DRUM



The Avedis Zildjian cymbal company and drum makers Noble & Cooley have combined their skills to produce a bronze-shell snare drum. The drum's shell has been created of Zildjian's cymbal alloy—the first time that this material has ever been used for anything other than cymbals, gongs, or bells. The overall construction of the drum conforms to Noble & Cooley's designs, including lugs mounted at the nodal points to minimize the dampening of shell vibration, precision-cut snare beds and bearing edges, and an ultra-thin shell casting.

Available only in 14 x 6 1/2 dimensions, the drum is claimed by the manufacturers to possess "extreme dynamic range, sensational sensitivity, and a unique and exclusive tone." According to a spokesman for Zildjian, "To understand the uniqueness of the sound of this drum, one must try to imagine the warmth and body of a wood-shell drum combined with the bite and tone of a metal-shell drum." Visually, the Zildjian alloy glistens gold underneath the special gun-metal black chrome finish of Noble & Cooley's hardware. For further information contact Colin Schofield, Avedis Zildjian Company, 22 Longwater Drive, Norwell, Massachusetts 02364.

RIMSHOT DRUMSTICKS

Rimshot drumsticks, previously available only in Canada, have now entered the American and world markets. The sticks are of premium hickory, are American-made, and, as partners Eddie Tuduri and Tim Smith state, "are back-to-basics, natural wood sticks. Rimshot uses no cosmetic wood fillers or the typical heavy lacquers, which make sticks slippery. Virtually every drummer we've spoken to is turned on to the fact that our sticks are easy to hold on to and have a natural 'give' to them. When

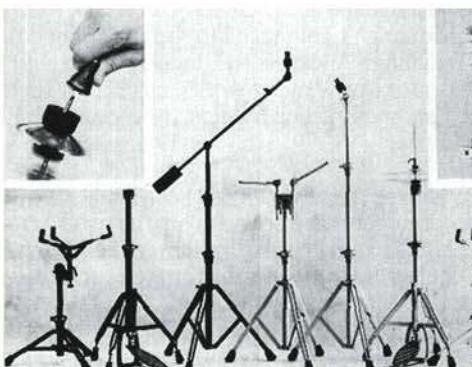
sticks are heavily lacquered, the lacquer soaks into the wood pores and dries rock-solid. This may create a heavy, solid stick. But more importantly, it also causes the stick not to 'give' on impact, resulting in sticks that are brittle and easier to break. Ours are not the prettiest sticks on the market, but we feel we are providing what drummers really want."

Rimshot offers a full range of sizes from 7A to 3S in wood and nylon tips, along with several special sizes for heavy hitters and timbale sticks for Latin players. The nylon tips are applied by a heat process, sealing them over the wooden ends of the sticks. According to the company, this process causes their nylon tips to stay on longer than those of other brands.

Rimshot Drumsticks also offers what they believe to be the only drumstick guarantee. Against breakage? "Of course not," say Tuduri and Smith, "let's be realistic here. All sticks break. We offer our dealers an exclusive 'Banana Replacement Policy.' Simply stated, if they get one of our sticks that is badly warped, unrollable—in other words, a 'banana'—and therefore unsellable and destined for the 99-cent bin, our company will gladly replace it. Our company is built on integrity and honesty. We have a lot of pride, and a desire to give something back to our fellow drummers."

For more information, contact Rimshot America, 6454 Van Nuys Boulevard #150, Van Nuys, California 91401, (818) 782-8848.

SONOR PROTEC HARDWARE



Sonor has introduced a new hardware line called Protec. The hardware uses a special lightweight alloy, said to be superior to ordinary aluminum in strength, yet extremely light in weight. This method of construction, according to Sonor, "adds up to superior corrosion resistance and a high level of durability."

The surface of Protec hardware is sealed by an anodizing process, providing additional protection against scratching. All

height adjustments are accompanied by quick-release levers for instant positioning. Cymbal stands are equipped with a pinch-release cymbal clamp that allows for instant set-up, tension adjustment, and removal of the cymbal. Tom holders and tom stands contain rubber insulators to prevent undesired absorption of sound. All of the Protec hardware is available in a choice of matt silver or black finish. For more information, contact HSS, Inc., P.O. Box 9167, Richmond, Virginia 23227, (804) 798-4500.

AKAI S950 SAMPLER



Akai Professional recently announced the release of the new 5950 Digital Sampler. The designated successor to the S900, which has become an industry standard, the S950 includes a number of new features.

Improved analog-to-digital converters are being used, yielding a better dynamic range. The sampling rate has been increased from 40 kHz to 44.1 kHz, yielding a usable audio bandwidth in excess of 17 kHz. The S950 also has an expandable memory—up to 2.25 Megabytes total—using two 750-kbyte memory cards in a high-density disk drive. The drive loads more quickly than the 5900's, yet is completely compatible with disks recorded on that unit. For mass storage purposes, an optional hard disk interface to either an Atari or Supra hard disk drive will be available. This interface also allows a new method of recording samples into the S950: a CD/DAT interface. With this, the user will be able to record samples directly into the S950 in a digital format. No conversion to analog is needed.

All the VS. 2.0 software features available only on disk for the S900 are now built into the S950. These features include crossfade looping, dynamic filter envelope, pre-trigger recording, and automatic finding of the start point of a sample. A new editing feature called "Time Stretch" is available for the first time on any sampler. This feature allows the S950 to lengthen or shorten the playback time of a sample—or any portion thereof—without changing its pitch. This feature is said to be especially helpful for stretching out a segment to be looped, in order to give a more consistent amplitude over the length of the loop. For more information, contact Akai Professional, P.O. Box 2344, Fort Worth, Texas 76113, (817)336-5114.

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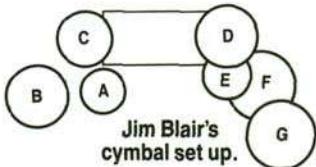
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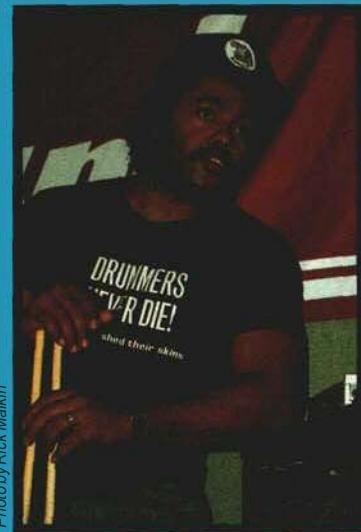


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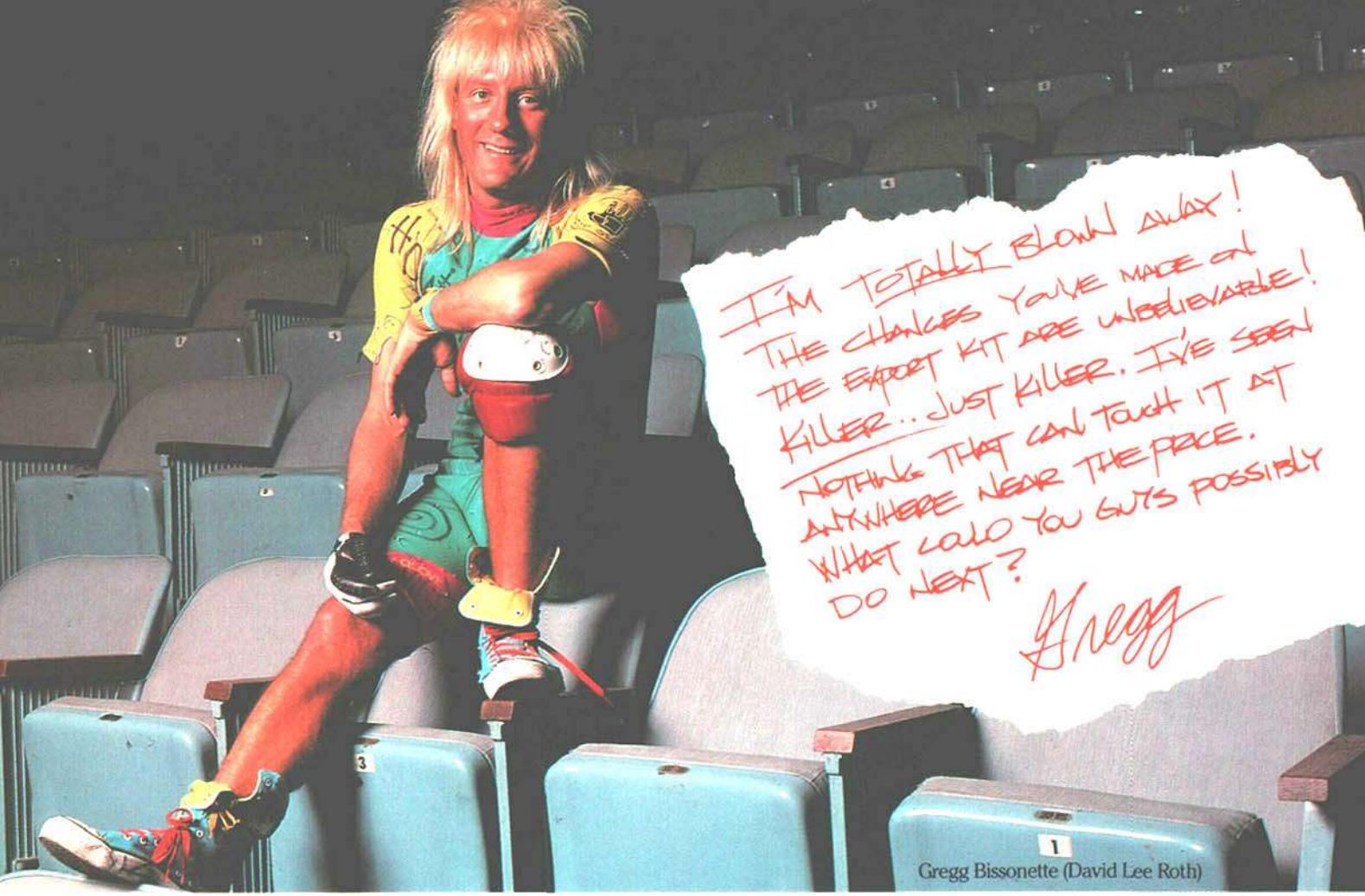
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